Wm Henry THE Finlay

ESSAYS

OF

Michael, Seigneur *de Montaigne*,

Tranſlated into ENGLISH.

The EIGHTH EDITION.

WITH VERY CONSIDERABLE

AMENDMENTS and IMPROVEMENTS,

From the moſt accurate FRENCH Edition of

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ESSAYS
OF
MICHAEL Seigneur de *Montaigne.*

Continuation of BOOK III.

CHAP. I. *Of Coaches.*

'TIS very eaſy to make it appear that great authors, when they treat of cauſes, do not only mention thoſe which they judge to be the true cauſes, but thoſe alſo which they think are not ſo; provided they have any invention or beauty to recommend them. If what they ſay be ingenious, 'tis true and uſeful enough. We cannot be poſitive what is the chief cauſe, and, therefore, muſter up ſeveral to ſee if it may not accidentally be amongſt them.

———*Namque unam dicere cauſam*
Non ſatis eſt, verum plures unde una tamen ſit. *
And thus my muſe a ſtore of cauſes brings;
For here, as in a thouſand other things,
Tho' by one ſingle cauſe th' effect is done,
Yet ſince 'tis had a thouſand muſt be ſhewn
That we may ſurely hit that ſingle one.

Will you aſk me whence comes the cuſtom of bleſſing thoſe who ſneeze? We produce wind three ſeveral ways; that which ſallies from below is filthy; that which is vented by the mouth bears ſome reproach of gluttony; the third eruption is ſneezing, which, becauſe it

* Lucret. lib. vi. v. 703.

it comes from the head, and is without offence, we give it this civil reception. Do not laugh at this crafty diſtinction; for they ſay it is Ariſtotle's. I think I have read in Plutarch (who of all the authors I know, is he who has beſt mix'd art with nature, and judgment with ſcience) giving for a reaſon of the riſing of the ſtomach in thoſe who go to ſea, that it is occaſioned by their fear; he having found out ſome reaſon, by which he proves that fear is capable of producing ſuch an effect *. I, who am very much ſubject to this effect, know very well that 'tis not owing to this cauſe; and I know it not by argument, but by unavoidable experience. Without inſtancing what I have been told, that the ſame thing often happens to the beaſts, eſpecially to ſwine, when free from any apprehenſion of danger; and what an acquaintance of mine has told me of himſelf, that, being very ſubject to it, his inclination to vomit has gone off two or three times, being terrify'd to a great degree in a violent ſtorm: as it happen'd to that ancient who ſaid, "Pejus vexabar quàm ut periculum mihi ſuc-"curreret,†" i. e. I was too much diſorder'd for the apprehenſion of danger to relieve me. I never was afraid upon the water; nor, indeed, elſewhere (and have often had juſt reaſons for fear, if death be ſuch a cauſe) ſo as to be diſturbed and change countenance. Fear ſprings ſometimes as well from want of judgment as from want of courage. All the dangers which I have been in, I have look'd upon without winking, with a free, ſolid, and intire countenance; and beſides, to be afraid requires courage. It has formerly ſerv'd me better than other courſes, ſo to conduct and regulate my flight, that it was, if not without fear, yet it was without terror and aſtoniſhment. It was ſtirr'd indeed, but without amazement or ſtupefaction. Great ſouls go much farther, and repreſent flights, not only calm and temperate, but, moreover, intrepid. We will mention that which Alcibiades ¶ relates of Socrates, his companion in arms, 'After our army was routed, I found 'him

* In a tract, intitled, Natural Cauſes, c. 11. Ψυχὴ σαλον ἔχουσα καὶ θορυβουμενη συσκινεῖ καὶ ἀναπίμπλησι το σῶμα τῆς ταραχῆς. † Senec. ep. 53. ¶ Plato in his Banquet, p. 1206. of the Francfort edit. in 1602.

'him and Lachez in the very rear of thoſe who fled, 'and view'd him at my leiſure, and in ſecurity, for I 'was mounted on a good horſe and he on foot; and 'thus we had fought; I took notice in the firſt place 'with what deliberation and reſolution he fought, 'compar'd with Lachez, and then the gallantry of his 'ſtep nothing different from his ordinary gait, his firm 'and regular countenance, viewing and judging what 'paſs'd about him, looking one while on thoſe, and 'another while upon other friends and enemies, after 'ſuch a manner, as encouraged the one, and ſignify'd 'to the other, that he wou'd ſell his life dear to any 'one that offer'd to take it from him; and ſo they 'ſav'd themſelves, for ſuch men are not ſo liable to be 'attack'd as thoſe who run away are to be purſued.' That was the teſtimony of this great commander, which teaches us, what we experience every day, that nothing throws us ſo much into dangers as an inconſiderate eagerneſs to keep clear of them. * "Quo timoris minus eſt, eo minus ferme periculi eſt," i. e. Where there is the leaſt fear there is generally the leaſt danger. When a man is ready to declare that he thinks of death, and foreſees it, our people are in the wrong to ſay that, therefore, he is afraid of it. Our foreſight of the good or ill, that affects us, is equally proper for us. To conſider and judge of danger is, in ſome ſort, the reverſe of being aſtoniſh'd at it. I do not find myſelf ſtrong enough to ſuſtain the ſhock and impetuoſity of this paſſion of fear, or of any other that is vehement. If I was once conquer'd and beaten down by it I ſhould never riſe again intire. Whoever ſhou'd once make my ſoul loſe its footing wou'd never reſtore it to its right place. It ſearches, and probes itſelf too deeply and too much to the quick, and wou'd never ſuffer the wound it had received to be cloſed and skinn'd over. It has been well for me that no ſickneſs has yet diſmounted it. Every attack made upon me I oppoſe with a high hand; by which means the firſt that ſhou'd rout me would put it out of my power ever to rally again. I have no after-game to play. On which ſide ſoever the inundation breaks my banks, I lie open, and am

* Titus Livy, lib. xxii. c. 5.

drown'd without remedy. Epicurus ſaid, that a wiſe man can never turn fool; and I have an opinion the reverſe of this ſentence, that he who has been once a very fool will never after be very wiſe. God gives me cold according to my cloathing, and paſſions proportionable to the ſtrength I have to bear them. Nature having laid me open on the one ſide, has cover'd me on the other. She has diſarm'd me of ſtrength, but has arm'd me with inſenſibility, and an apprehenſion that is either moderate or dull. I have not for ſometime (and much leſs when I was young) been reconciled to a coach, litter, or boat; and hate all other riding but on horſeback, both in town and country. But to me a litter is more intolerable than a coach, and for the ſame reaſon had rather be toſs'd upon the water, ſo as to give me fear than be rock'd in a dead calm. By the little jerks I feel from the oars ſtealing the veſſel from under me, I find both my head and ſtomach diſorder'd I know not how, ſince I can't endure that my ſeat ſhou'd tremble. When the ſail, or current of the water, keeps us upright, or when we are in tow, that regular agitation gives me no uneaſineſs. 'Tis an interrupted motion that offends me, and moſt of all when 'tis moſt languid; I know not how to expreſs it otherwiſe. The phyſicians have order'd me to ſqueeze and gird the bottom of my belly with a napkin as a remedy; which, however, I have not try'd, being accuſtom'd to ſtruggle with my own infirmities, and to overcome them by myſelf.

Wou'd my memory ſerve me, I ſhou'd not think my time ill ſpent in ſetting down here the infinite variety that we find in hiſtories as to the uſe of chariots in the ſervice of war; various according to the nations, and according to the ages; and, in my opinion, of great effect and neceſſity, inſomuch that 'tis a wonder we have loſt all knowledge of them. I will only ſay this, that very lately, in the time of our fathers, the Hungarians made very advantageous uſe of them againſt the Turks; every one of them having a targeteer and a muſqueteer, and a number of Harquebuſiers ready and charg'd, and all cover'd with a target-fence, like that which defends the rowers in a galley. They ſet three thouſand ſuch chariots in the front of their battle, and, after their can-

non

non had play'd, made them all pour in their ſhot upon the enemy, and force them to ſwallow that diſcharge, before they taſted of the reſt, which was no little advance; or elſe they drove the ſaid coaches into their ſquadrons to break them, and open a paſſage thro' them; beſides the uſe which they might make of them in a dangerous place to flank the troops marching into the field, or to cover a lodgment ſpeedily, and fortify it. In my time a gentleman, in one of our frontier places, who was unweildy, and cou'd procure no horſe able to carry his weight, having a quarrel upon his hands, rode thro' the country in a chariot of this faſhion, and found great convenience in it. But we will leave theſe military chariots.

The laſt kings of our firſt race, as if their effeminacy had not been ſufficiently manifeſt by other proofs of it *, travel'd through the country lolling in a chariot drawn by four oxen. Mark Anthony was the firſt that caus'd † himſelf to be drawn at Rome by lions harnaſs'd to his coach, in which a ſinging wench rode with him. Heliogabalus did as much afterwards, calling himſelf Cybele, the mother of the gods †, and was alſo drawn by tygers, counterfeiting the god Bacchus; he alſo one while harnaſs'd a brace of ſtags to his coach,

* Mr. Cotton, by not adverting to a tranſpoſition made here by his author, has been deceiv'd in his meaning, and begins the paragraph thus, "As if the inſignificancy of coaches had "not been ſufficiently known by better proofs, &c." This miſtake of ſo able a tranſlator, has oblig'd me to explain this paſſage, which is liable to be miſunderſtood alſo by many others. I ſhall only add, that this kind of tranſpoſition, in which all the difficulty lies, being very familiar to Montaigne, his tranſlator ought to be well acquainted with it. As every man has his particular gait and tone of voice, ſo every author has his peculiar ſtile. If a tranſlator duly conſiders, before hand, the turn, the manners, and, as one may ſay, the very ſteps of his original, he wou'd often underſtand it by half a word; but if he neglect to make it familiar to him, by contenting himſelf with a vague underſtanding of it that is merely grammatical, he will every now and then make the author, whom he tranſlates, ſpeak the very contrary to what he means; and generally, inſtead of entering into the ſpirit of his author, will only expreſs his meaning in a very imperfect manner. † Plutarch in the life of Mark Anthony, cap. 3. † Ælius Lampridus, P. 110, 111, Hiſt. Auguſt.

at another time four dogs, and at another four whores, by whom he was drawn in ſtate, both himſelf and they ſtark naked. The emperor Firmus caus'd his coach to be drawn by oſtriches of a prodigious ſize, ſo that it ſeem'd rather to fly than run upon wheels †.

The ſtrangeneſs of theſe inventions puts this other fancy into my head, that 'tis a kind of puſillanimity in monarchs, and a proof that they are not ſufficiently ſenſible what they are, when they court honour, and affect a grand appearance by exceſſive expence. It were, indeed, excuſable when in a foreign country; but when a prince is among his own ſubjects, where he may do what he liſt, it derogates from his dignity, which is the higheſt degree of honour that he is capable of attaining to. So, methinks, it is ſuperfluous in a private gentleman to go finely dreſs'd at home, ſince his houſe, his retinue, and his table, anſwer ſufficiently for him. The advice that Iſocrates gives to his king, ſeems to be grounded upon reaſon, viz. That he ſhould be ſplendid¶ in his furniture and utenſils, foraſmuch as 'tis an expence in what is durable, and will paſs to his ſucceſſors; and that he ſhou'd avoid all ſorts of magnificence which ſoon grow out of faſhion, and are forgot. I lov'd to go fine when I was a younger brother, for want of other ornament, and it became me well. There are ſome people upon whom fine cloaths are an eyeſore. We have admirable ſtories of the frugality of our kings with reſpect to their perſons and gifts: kings that were great in reputation, merit, and fortune. Demoſthenes pleads ſtrenuouſly againſt the law of the city that aſſign'd the public money for the pomp of their games and feſtivals. He would have their grandeur diſplay'd in a number of ſhips well equipp'd, and good armies well provided for: and Theophraſtus * is juſtly to be blam'd, who, in his book of riches, has eſtabliſhed

† Flavii Vopiſſe Firmus, p. 244. Hiſt. Auguſt. ¶ Orat. ad Nicoclem, p. 32. Paris edit. for John Libert, anno 1621.

* The author of this cenſure was Cic. de Offic. lib. ii. c. 16. where he ſays, "Miror quod in mentem venerit Theophraſto, "in eo libro quem de Divitiis ſcripſit; in quo multa præclare "illud abſurde. Eſt enim multus in laudanda magnificentia "et apparatione popularium munerum; taliumque ſumptuum "facultatem fructum divitiarum putat."

ed a contrary opinion, and maintains that an expence of this nature is the true fruit of opulence, Theſe are pleaſures, ſays Ariſtotle *, that only affect the loweſt claſs of the people, that vaniſh from their remembrance as ſoon as they are glutted with them, and of which no ſerious and judicious man can have any eſteem †. Such expence wou'd in my opinion, be much more royal, as well as more uſeful, juſt, and durable, in ports, docks, walls, and fortifications; in ſumptuous fabrics, churches, hoſpitals, colleges, the repair of ſtreets and highways; for which the memory of pope Gregory xiii will be revered to late poſterity; and wherein our queen Katharine wou'd manifeſt her natural generoſity and magnificence to ſucceeding ages, if ſhe had it as much in her power, as ſhe has it at heart. Fortune has vex'd me much by interrupting the fine ſtructure of the Pont-neuf of our great city, and depriving me of the hopes of ever ſeeing it finiſh'd.

Moreover, the ſubjects, who are ſpectators of theſe triumphs, are apt to think that the riches diſplay'd before them are their own, and that they are entertain'd at their own coſt. For the people are ready to preſume of kings as we do of our ſervants, that they ought to take care to provide us abundantly with all that we want; but that they ought not to finger any part of it themſelves. And therefore, the emperor Galba being pleas'd with the performance of a certain muſician who play'd to him at ſupper, call'd for his coffer, and gave him a handful of crowns which he took out of it, with theſe words, "This is not the public money, but my "own." But ſo it is that the people are moſt commonly in the right, and that their eyes are fed with what they had once to feed their bellies.

Liberality itſelf ſhines not with its true luſtre in a ſovereign hand. It beſt becomes private people; for to conſider the matter nicely, a king has nothing properly his own; and he owes, even himſelf, to others. Juriſdiction is not granted in favour of the magiſtrate, but of the people that become ſubject to it. A ſuperior is

* All this is alſo taken from Cic. de Offic. lib. ii. c. 16.
† And this likewiſe, ibid. c. 17.

is never created ſuch for his own profit, but that of the inferior; and a phyſician for the ſick perſon, not for himſelf. All magiſtracy, as well as every art or myſtery, is deſign'd for external application. * "Nulla ars in "ſe verſatur," i. e. No art is confin'd within itſelf: therefore the governors of young princes, who ſtudy to imprint this virtue of liberality on their minds, and preach to 'em to deny nothing, and to reckon nothing ſo well laid out as what they give (a leſſon which I have known to be very much in vogue) either have more regard to their own profit than that of their ſovereign, or don't well underſtand whom they ſpeak to. 'Tis a very eaſy matter to imprint liberality in the perſon who has as much as he will to ſupply it with at the expence of another. And the eſtimate of it not being form'd according to the value of the preſent, but upon the wealth of the giver, it dwindles to nothing in ſuch able hands. They become prodigal before they are liberal: and yet their liberality is but of ſmall recommendation compar'd with the other royal virtues; yet 'tis the only one, as Dionyſius ſaid, that ſuits well with tyranny itſelf. I ſhou'd rather teach him that verſe of the ancient huſbandman,

Τῇ χειρὶ δεῖ σπείρειν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὅλῳ τῷ θυλακῷ †,

i. e. That whoever hopes for a good crop muſt ſow with his hand, and not pour the ſeed out of the bag. The grain ſhou'd be ſcatter'd, and not caſt on the ground in heaps; and that ſince he is to give, or rather pay and make amends to ſo many people, according to their deſerts, he ought to diſtribute with juſtice and

* Cicero has theſe words, "Semper illud extra eſt quod "arte comprehenditur. Nihil opus eſt exemplis hoc facere lon-"gius; eſt enim perſpicuum nullam artem in ſe verſari ſed eſſe "aliud artem ipſam, aliud quod propoſitum ſit arti." De Finib. Bon et Mal. lib. v. c. 6. How happy wou'd be the ſubjects of Perſia, Indoſtan, &c. if their princes and miniſters had the wiſdom and virtue to draw from this great principle the concluſion which naturally flows from it, and which Montaigne here points out to them? † This maxim Montaigne has quoted from a ſmall tract of Plutarch, intitled, "Whether the "Athenians were more excellent in Arms than in Learning," c. 4. where Corinna makes uſe of it to convince Pindar that he had in one of his poems inſerted too many fables.

and deliberation. If the bounty of a prince be without diſcretion, and without meaſure, I had rather he were covetous.

The virtue of royalty ſeems to conſiſt moſt in juſtice; and of all the parts of juſtice, that beſt denotes the king, which accompanies his liberality; for this they have particularly reſerv'd to their own province, whereas all other juſtice they remit to the adminiſtration of others. Laviſh bounty is a very weak means to acquire them good will; for it diſguſts more people than it brings over to them. * "Quo in plures uſus ſis, minus in multos uti poſſis.—Quid autem eſt ſtultius, quàm, quod libenter facias, curare, ut id diutiùs facere non poſſis?" i. e. The more you diſpenſe to ſome, the leſs you will be able to diſpenſe to many: and what greater folly can there be than to order it ſo, that what you are heartily inclin'd to do, you put it out of your power to perform long? And if it be conferr'd without regard to merit, it puts him to the bluſh who receives it, and is receiv'd with an ill grace. Tyrants have been ſacrific'd to the hatred of the people by the hands of thoſe very men whom they have unjuſtly advanced; ſuch kind of men thinking to ſecure to themſelves the poſſeſſion of benefits unduly receiv'd, if they diſcover a contempt and hatred of him from whom they deriv'd them; and in this they join with the common judgment and opinion.

When a prince makes exorbitant grants his ſubjects make exorbitant demands, and accommodate themſelves not to reaſon, but example. We have reaſon, certainly, very often to bluſh at our own impudence. We are over-paid, according to juſtice, when the recompence equals our ſervice; for don't we owe ſomething to our prince by natural obligation? If he bears our expence he does too much; 'tis enough that he contributes to it: the overplus is call'd a benefit which cannot be demanded, for the very name of liberality ſounds of liberty. As we uſe it there is no end on't. We never reckon what we have receiv'd. We are only for that liberality which is to come. For which reaſon, the more a prince exhauſts himſelf in giving

* Cicero de Offic. lib. ii. c. 15.

ving, the poorer he becomes in friends. How ſhou'd he ſatisfy thoſe longing appetites, which the more they are fed the more they crave? He whoſe thoughts are bent upon graſping never more thinks of what he has graſp'd. There is nothing ſo peculiar to covetouſneſs as ingratitude.

The example of Cyrus will not do amiſs in this place, to ſerve the kings of this age as a touchſtone to know whether their bounties are well or ill beſtow'd, and to ſhew them how much better that emperor proportion'd them than they do: by this means they are reduc'd afterwards to borrow of their unknown ſubjects; and rather of them to whom they have done wrong, than of thoſe to whom they have done good; and ſo receive aids from them, wherein there is nothing of a Free Gift but the name. Crœſus reproach'd him for his largeſs, and * caſt up how much his treaſure wou'd have amounted to if he had been cloſer fiſted. Cyrus long'd to juſtify his liberality, and therefore ſent diſpatches into all parts to the grandees of his dominions, whom he had particularly advanc'd, requeſting every one of them to aſſiſt his neceſſity with as much money as he cou'd ſpare, and to ſend it to him with a note of the ſums. When all the bills were brought to him, every one of his friends, not thinking it enough to offer him only ſo much as he had receiv'd from his bounty, and adding to it a great deal more of his own †, it happen'd that this ſum amounted to much more than if he had been as frugal as Crœſus wou'd have had him: whereupon Cyrus ſaid, ‡ 'I am as much in love with 'riches as other princes, but rather a better manager. 'You ſee with what a ſmall depoſit I have gain'd the 'ineſtimable treaſure of ſo many friends, and how 'much more faithful treaſures they are to me than mer-'cenary men wou'd be without obligation, without af-'fection; and that my caſh is better lodg'd than in 'cheſts, which wou'd bring upon me the hatred, en-'vy, and contempt of other princes.'

The

* In Xenophon's Cyropædia, lib. 8. § 9. † Ibid. § 10. Λέγεται δὴ λογιζόμενος ὁ Κροῖσος πολλαπλάσια εὑρεῖν, ἢ ἐφη Κύρῳ ἂν εἶναι ἐν τοῖς θησαυροῖς ἤδη, εἰ συνέλεγεν. ‡ Ibid. § 11.

The emperors alledg'd the dependency of their authority in ſome meaſure (at leaſt in appearance) on the good-will of the Roman people, as an excuſe for the ſuperfluity of their plays and public ſpectacles; they having been accuſtom'd at all times to be humour'd with ſuch extravagant ſhows, and entertainments. But they were private men who had brought up this cuſtom to gratify their fellow citizens and companions by ſuch profuſion and magnificence, chiefly at their own expence; the cuſtom had quite another taſte when it came to be kept up by the ſovereigns. " Pecuniarum tranſlatio a " juſtis dominis ad alienos non debet liberalis videri *, i. e. The transferring of money from the right owners to others ought not to be deem'd liberality.

Philip perceiving that his ſon went about to gain the affection of the Macedonians by preſents, reprimanded him in a letter after this manner, viz. ' What could ' miſlead you to think that thoſe will be faithful to you ' whom thou haſt brib'd with money? have you a mind ' that the Macedonians ſhou'd look upon you not as ' their ſovereign, but as their caſh-keeper and cor- ' rupter? if you wou'd practice upon them, do it by ' the good deeds of virtue, and not by bounty from ' thy coffers †.'

It was, however, a fine thing to bring to the theatre, and therein plant a great number of large trees, with all their branches in full verdure, repreſenting a great ſhady forreſt, beautifully diſpos'd in a juſt ſymmetry; and, on the firſt day, to throw into it a thouſand oſtriches, a thouſand ſtags, a thouſand boars, and as many fallow deer, and abandon them to the prey of the people; and the next day to cauſe a hundred great lions, as many leopards, and three hundred bears to be knock'd on the head in his preſence; and, on the third day, to make three hundred couple of gladiators fight in earneſt; all which was done by the emperor Probus. 'Twas alſo very fine to ſee thoſe vaſt amphitheatres cas'd with marble, curiouſly ſet off with figures and ſtatues, and the inſide ſhining with rare decorations.

Baltheus

* Cicero de offic. lib. i. c. 14. † Cicero de offic. lib. ii. c. 15.

Baltheus * *en gemmis, en illita porticus auro* †.
Behold a belt, with jewels glorious made,
And a brave portico with gold o'erlaid.

All the ſides of this great ſpace fill'd and environ'd, from the bottom to the top, with ſixty or eighty rows of ſeats, all of marble alſo, and cover'd with cuſhions,

——— exeat, inquit,
Si pudor eſt, et de pulvino ſurgat equeſtri,
Cujus res legi non ſufficit ‖.
They who by law can't make a title fit,
Let ſuch, for ſhame, th'equeſtrian cuſhion quit.

Where an hundred thouſand ſpectators might ſit at their eaſe; and to make the ſtage, where the plays were perform'd, firſt open by art, and to cleave into chaſms repreſenting dens, from which iſſued out the beaſts deſign'd for the ſpectacle; and then, ſecondly, to bring a deluge of water upon the ſtage, carrying ſea monſters, and ſhips of force to repreſent a ſea fight; and, thirdly, to drain and dry the ſtage again for the combats of the gladiators; and, for the fourth ſcene, to have the ſtage ſtrow'd with vermilion and ſtorax, inſtead of ſand, there to make a ſolemn feaſt for all that vaſt multitude of people; which is the laſt act of one day only.

——— quoties nos deſcendentis arenæ
Vidimus in partes, ruptáque voragine terræ
Emerſiſſe feras, et iiſdem ſæpe latebris
Aurea cum croceo creverunt arbuta libro.
Nec ſolum nobis ſilveſtria cernere monſtra
Contigit, æquoreos ego cum certantibus urſis
Spectavi vitulos, et equorum nomine dignum,
Sed deforme pecus ¶.

How

* I know not what is ſtrictly to be underſtood here by the word Baltheus. In the amphitheatres this term was apply'd to certain ſteps that were higher and wider than the others, as may be ſeen in the antiquities of father Montfaucon, tom. 3. part 2. p. 256. Father Tachart, in his Latin and French dictionary, ſays, that the word is us'd by Vitruvius to denote a belt or girdle round the bottom and top of a column. Whether jewels wou'd make a better figure there than on Montfaucon's ſteps I leave to the determination of the connoiſſeurs. † Calphurnius, eclog. 7. intitl'd, Templum. ‖ Juv. ſat. 3. v. 153. ¶ Calphurn. eclog. 7. v. 64 to 72.

How often, when ſpectators, have we ſeen
Part of the ſpacious theatre ſink in,
And, from a ſudden chaſm in the earth,
Start up wild beaſts: then preſently give birth
Unto a ſhining grove of golden bow'rs,
Of ſhrubs that bloſſom'd with enamell'd flow'rs?
Nor yet of ſylvan monſters had we ſight
Alone; I ſaw ſea calves with wild bears fight;
And a deformed ſort of cattle came,
Which river or ſea horſes we might name.

Sometimes they have made a high mountain riſe full of fruit trees, and others of verdure; from the tops of which trickled a current of water, as from the mouth of a fountain. One while a great ſhip came rolling in, which open'd and divided of itſelf; and, after having diſgorg'd from its hold four or five hundred beaſts for fight, clos'd again, and diſappear'd of itſelf. At other times, from the bottom of this ſtage, they caus'd ſweet ſcented waters to ſpout upwards, and dart their threads to ſuch a prodigious height as to ſprinkle and perfume the vaſt multitude of ſpectators. Then, to defend themſelves from the wind, rain, or heat, they had that huge fabrick cover'd over with purple curtains of needle-work, or of ſilk of various colours, which they cou'd either draw or undraw as they pleas'd.

Quamvis non modico caleant Spectacula ſole
Vela reducuntur cum venit Hermogenes *.
The curtains, tho' the ſun does ſcorch the ſkin,
Are, when Hermogenes ‖ appears, drawn in.

The net-work alſo, that was ſet before the people to defend them from the fury of thoſe wild beaſts, was of gold tiſſue.

——— *Auro quoque torta refulgent* †.
Retia.
And woven nets refulgent are with gold.

If there be any thing excuſable in extravagancies of this kind, 'tis where the invention and novelty furniſh admiration,

* Martial. lib. xii. v. 15, 16. ‖ This Hermogenes was an arrant thief and they took down the curtains for fear he ſhou'd find ſome means or other to ſteal them away. † Calphurnius, eclog. 8. intitl'd, Templum, v. 53.

ration, and not the expence. In theſe ſame vanities we diſcover how fruitful thoſe ages were in wits of a different kind from ours. It fares with this ſort of fertility as it does with all other productions of nature. Not that ſhe therein employ'd her utmoſt effort at that time. We do not travel, we rather roam up and down, and whirl this way and that; and tread the ſame ground over again. I am afraid our knowledge is weak in ev'ry reſpect. We do not look far, and ſcarce at all behind us. Our underſtanding comprehends little, and exiſts but a little while, it being ſhort not only in extent of time, but of matter.

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi, ſed omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte *.
Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave;
Whoſe huge ambition's now contain'd
In the ſmall compaſs of a grave:
In endleſs night they ſleep, unwept, unknown.

† *Et ſupera bellum* Thebanum *et funera* Trojæ,
Multi alias alii quoque res cecinere Poetæ ‖.
And long before the wars of Thebes and Troy,
On other things bards did their ſong employ.

And Solon's account of what he had learnt from the Egyptian prieſts, of the long duration of their ſtate, and of their way of learning and preſerving foreign hiſtories, is not, methinks, a teſtimony to be ſlighted upon this conſideration. ¶ "Si interminatam in omnes partes magnitudinem regionum videremus et temporum, "in

* Horace, lib. iv. ode 9. v. 25, &c. † Montaigne diverts himſelf here in giving Lucretius' words, in this diſtich, a conſtruction directly contrary to what they bear in that poem. ‖ Lucret. lib. v. v. 327, &c. ¶ Here alſo Montaigne puts a ſenſe quite different from what the words bear in the original; but the application he makes of them is ſo happy that one wou'd declare they were actually put together only to expreſs his own ſentiment. "Et temporum" is an addition by Montaigne, and, inſtead of "Infinita vis innumerabilium appareret "formarum," 'tis in Cicero "Infinita vis innumerabilium vo- "litat atomorum" Theſe two laſt are ſufficient to ſhew that Cicero treats of quite another thing than what Montaigne does here.

" in quam ſe injiciens animus et intendens, ita late " longeque peregrinatur, ut nullam oram ultimi videat, " in qua poſſit inſiſtere: In hac immenſitate----infinita " vis innumerabilium, appareret formarum §, i. e. ' Cou'd we ſee that boundleſs extent of countries and ' ages, in all their parts, on which the mind being fix'd ' and intent, might ramble where and when it liſt, with ' out meeting with any limits to its ſight, we ſhould diſ- ' cover innumerable forms in that immenſity.' Tho' all that is arriv'd to our knowledge of the time paſt ſhou'd be true, and known by any one perſon, it wou'd be leſs than nothing compar'd with what is unknown. And of this very image of the world, which glides away while we are in it, how ſcanty and contracted is the knowledge of the moſt curious inquirers? not only of particular events, which fortune often renders exemplary and important, but of the ſtate of great governments and nations, not above a hundredth part has reach'd our knowledge. We make a parade of the wonderful invention of our Great Guns, and of our Printing, which other men, at the other end of the world, in China, enjoy'd a thouſand years before us. Did we but ſee as much of the world as we do not ſee, 'tis to be believ'd we ſhou'd perceive a perpetual multiplication and viciſſitude of forms. There is nothing ſingle and rare in reſpect to nature, nor, indeed, with regard to our knowledge, which is a wretched foundation for our rules, and fondly preſents us with a very falſe image of things. As we, now a-days, vainly infer the world to be in a ſtate of declenſion and decrepitude by the arguments we draw from our own weakneſs and decay,

Jamque adeò affecta eſt ætas, effætaque tellus *.

So much the age, ſo much the earth decays.

In like manner did he, of old, vainly conjecture the birth and youth of the world, by the vigour he obſerv'd in the wits of his time abounding in novelties, and the invention of divers arts.

Verùm, ut opinor, habet novitatem ſumma, recenſque
Natura eſt mundi, neque primum exordia cæpit:
Quare etiam quædam nunc artes expoliuntur,

Nunc

§ Cic. de Natura Deorum. lib. i, c. 20. * Lucret. lib. ii. v. 1150.

Nunc etiam augeſcunt, nunc addita navigiis ſunt
Multa †.

But ſure the nature of the world is ſtrong,
And, ſince it firſt began, it can't be long;
The reaſon, why I think ſo, is, we know
That arts increaſe, and ſtill politer grow;
And many things, in former times unknown,
Are added now to navigation.

This world of ours has lately found out another (and who will aſſure us that this is the laſt that will be diſcover'd, ſince the Dæmons, the Sibils, and We too were, till now, quite ignorant of this) altogether as big, populous, and fruitful as this; and yet ſuch a novice, ſo much a child that it ſtill learns its A, B, C. 'Tis not fifty years ago that it knew neither letters, weights, meaſures, veſtments, corn, nor vines. It was even quite naked in its mother's lap, and only lived upon what ſhe nurs'd it with. If we rightly judge of our period, and this poet alſo, of the youth of the age he liv'd in, this other world will be but juſt entering into light when ours ſhall make its exit. The univerſe will be paralytic; one member will be benumb'd, another in vigour. I fear, indeed, that we ſhall have very much haſten'd the decay and ruin of the new world by our infection, and that it will pay very dear for our opinions, and our arts. It was an infant world; yet we have not whipp'd, nor ſubjected it to our diſcipline by our valour and natural ſtrength; we have neither won the people by our juſtice and goodneſs, nor ſubdued them by our magnanimity. Moſt of their anſwers, and the negociations we have had with them, prove that they were not inferior to us in the clearneſs of natural underſtanding and apprehenſion. The aſtoniſhing magnificence of the cities of Cuſco and Mexico, and, among many things of the like kind, the garden of that king, wherein all trees, fruits, and herbs, according to the order and ſize they are of in a garden, were curiouſly figur'd in gold, as were in his cloſet all the animals bred in his dominions, and the ſea; and the beauty of their manufactures in jewels, feathers, cotton, and painting, ſhew that they did not yield to us neither in induſtry. But as for devotion, obſervance

† Lucret. *lib.* v. *v.* 331, &c.

ſervance of the laws, goodneſs, liberality, loyalty, and plain dealing, it was of ſervice to us that we had not ſo great a ſhare of thoſe virtues as they. For, by this advantage, they ruin'd, ſold, and betray'd themſelves.

As to boldneſs and courage, ſteddineſs, conſtancy, and a reſolution to bear pains, hunger, and even death, I ſhould not fear to ſet the examples I find among them in compariſon with the moſt noted inſtances in antiquity that are to be met with in the memoirs of our ſide of the globe. For, as to thoſe who have ſubdued them, take but away the tricks and frauds which they made uſe of to gull them, and the juſt cauſe which thoſe nations had of aſtoniſhment to ſee ſo ſudden, and unexpected an arrival of men with beards, differing in language, religion, form, and countenance, from ſo remote a part of the world, which they never heard was at all inhabited, mounted, on great monſters to them unknown, againſt ſuch as had not ſo much as ever ſeen a horſe before, or any other beaſt train'd up to carry a man or any other burden; to ſee thoſe men cas'd with a ſhining, impenetrable ſhell, and arm'd with a cutting and glittering blade, brandiſhing it againſt thoſe who, out of wonder at the brightneſs of a looking-glaſs or a knife, wou'd truck great wealth in gold and pearls for them; and who had neither the ſkill nor matter wherewith to penetrate our ſteel, if they had ever ſo much time: add to this the thunder and lightning of our cannon and muſkets, enough to have frighten'd Cæſar himſelf had he been ſurpriz'd when ſo unexperienc'd, and now againſt a naked people, except where they had the apparel of quilted cotton, without other arms at the moſt, but bows, ſtones, ſtaves, and bucklers of wood: a people overreach'd, under the colour of friendſhip and good faith, by a curioſity of ſeeing things ſtrange and unknown: take away, I ſay, this diſparity from the conquerors, and you take away from them all the ſource of ſo many victories. When I conſider that invincible ardour wherewith ſo many thouſands of men, women, and children ſo often preſented and threw themſelves into unavoidable dangers, for defence of their gods and their liberties; that generous obſtinacy to ſuffer all extremities and difficulties, and even death, rather than

ſubmit to the government of thoſe by whom they were ſo ſhamefully abus'd; and ſome chuſing rather to die of hunger, and to ſtarve themſelves to death, after being made priſoners, rather than to accept of nouriſhment from the hands of their enemies ſo baſely victorious: I foreſee, that whoever ſhou'd have attack'd them, ſuppoſing an equality of arms, experience, and numbers, wou'd have had a dangerous, if not a more deſperate taſk to manage than in any other war we have ſeen. What pity 'tis that ſo noble a conqueſt did not fall to Alexander, or to thoſe ancient Greeks and Romans; and that ſo great a revolution and change of ſo many empires and nations had not been effected by hands that might have us'd them courteouſly, and refin'd them by grubbing up what was ſavage amongſt them, cheriſhing, and propagating the good ſeed which nature had produc'd there; any by not only mingling in the culture of their lands and the ornament of their cities, the arts of this part of the world, but incorporating the virtues of the Greeks and Romans with thoſe that were originals of their country! what a reparation, and what an amendment wou'd it have been to the whole world, had our firſt examples and deportment in thoſe parts allur'd thoſe people to the admiration and imitation of virtue, and form'd a fraternal ſociety and underſtanding betwixt them and us! how eaſy wou'd it have been to have made advantage of minds ſo undiſciplin'd and ſo thirſty for knowledge, and ſuch as, for the greateſt part, had ſuch good natural parts to work upon.

On the contrary, we have taken advantage of their ignorance and inexperience with the greater eaſe to incline them to treachery, luxury, avarice, and to all ſorts of inhumanity and cruelty, by the example and pattern of our manners. Was paultry traffic ever promoted at ſo dear a rate? ſo many cities demoliſhed, ſo many nations exterminated, ſo many millions of people put to the ſword; and the richeſt, and moſt beautiful part of the world turn'd up-ſide-down for the traffic of pearls and pepper! mean victories! never did ambition, never did national animoſities provoke men to the commiſſion of ſuch horrid hoſtilities, againſt one another, attended with ſuch miſerable calamities.

Certain

Certain Spaniards coaſting along the ſea in queſt of their mines, landed in a very fruitful, pleaſant country, well inhabited, where they made their uſual remonſtrances to the people: 'that they were peaceable men, 'who had made a long voyage, being ſent on the part 'of the king of Caſtille, the greateſt prince in the habitable world, to whom the pope, God's vicegerent 'upon earth, had granted the principality of all the Indies: that if they wou'd become tributaries to him 'they ſhou'd be us'd very courteouſly; at the ſame time 'requiring proviſions of them for their nouriſhment, 'and gold for their uſe in medicine: they withal recommended to them the belief of one God alone, and the 'truth of our religion, which they adviſ'd them to embrace, adding thereto ſome menaces.' The anſwer was this, viz. 'That as to their being peaceable, they 'did not ſeem to be ſuch, if they were ſo. As to their 'king, becauſe he aſk'd, he muſt certainly be poor and 'neceſſitous; and the perſon who had allotted him this 'part of the world, muſt be a man fond of ſtrife, by attempting to give away that which was not his own, 'and to bring the title of the ancient poſſeſſors into diſpute. As to proviſions, they wou'd furniſh them; 'that of gold they had but little, and, indeed, made 'no account of it, foraſmuch as it was of no uſe to 'the ſervice of life, which all their care was to paſs 'happily and pleaſantly; that, however, they were 'welcome to take what they cou'd find, except that 'which was employ'd in the ſervice of their Gods. As 'to the one god only, they lik'd what they ſaid of him, 'but they were not inclin'd to change their religion, 'having ſo long liv'd in it to their advantage; and that 'they were not accuſtom'd to take advice from any but 'their friends and acquaintance. As to menaces, it 'diſcover'd a wrong judgment to offer to threaten 'thoſe whoſe nature and power was to them unknown: 'that, therefore, they had beſt quit their coaſt without 'delay, for they were not us'd to take the civilities and 'remonſtrances of armed men, and foreigners too, in 'good part; otherwiſe they ſhou'd do by them as they 'had done by thoſe others; ſhewing them, at the 'ſame time, the heads of ſeveral men executed, which

'were

'were ſet up round the walls of their city.' Whether this was childiſh babble, from an infant ſtate, let the inſtance here given determine. But ſo it is, that the Spaniards neither in this, nor many other places, where they did not find the merchandize they wanted, made no ſeizure nor attack, whatever other commodity was to be had there: Witneſs my cannibals.

Of two of the moſt potent monarchs of that world, and, perhaps, of this; kings of ſo many kings, and the laſt the Spaniards drove from thence, the king of Peru being taken in battle, and put to a ranſom ſo exceſſive as is beyond all belief; which however, was punctually paid; and having, by his converſation, given evident proof of a frank, generous, and conſtant ſpirit, and of a clear and undiſturb'd imagination, the conquerors, after having exacted of him a million, three hundred twenty-five thouſand five hundred weight of gold, beſides ſilver, and other things that amounted to no leſs (inſomuch that their horſes were now ſhod with ſolid gold) had a mind to ſee (how perfidious ſoever it might be deem'd) what might be the reſt of this king's treaſure, and to make that alſo their property. To this end, a falſe charge was preferr'd againſt him, and falſe evidence ſuborn'd to prove that he had form'd a deſign to raiſe an inſurrection in his provinces for recovering his liberty. Upon this, by the virtuous ſentence of the very men who had hatch'd this plot againſt him, he was condemn'd to be hang'd in public, making him compound for the torture of being burnt alive, by ſubmitting to baptiſm, at the place of execution. A horrid and unheard of barbarity, which he underwent, however, with an air truly brave and royal, without alteration either of his looks or language. And after this, to appeaſe the people, who were aſtoniſh'd and confounded at ſo ſtrange a ſcene, the Spaniards put on a ſhew of deep mourning for his death, and order'd him a ſumptuous funeral.

The other was the king of Mexico, who, after having been long beſieg'd in his capital city, wherein, if ever a prince and people ſhew'd it in this world, he diſcover'd the utmoſt that patience and perſeverance are capable of doing, had the misfortune of being deliver'd

deliver'd up alive into the hands of his enemies, upon articles of being treated as a king; (neither, during the time of his impriſonment, was any part of his behaviour unworthy of that title) but his enemies, after their conqueſt, not finding ſo much gold as they expected, when they had ranſack'd and rummag'd every place, they proceeded to extort new diſcoveries, by inflicting the moſt helliſh torments they cou'd invent upon the priſoners whom they had taken; but, as they gain'd no advantage by it, their courage being greater than their tortures, they were at laſt ſo inrag'd that, contrary to their faith, and contrary to the law of nations, they condemned the king himſelf, and one of the chief courtiers, to be put upon the rack in the preſence of one another. The nobleman finding his ſpirits near ſpent with the pains and the heat of burning coals all round him, pitifully turn'd his dying eyes upon his maſter, as if it were to aſk his pardon that he cou'd hold out no longer. The king, darting a fierce and ſevere look at him, as reproaching his cowardice and meanneſs of ſpirit, ſaid only theſe words to him with a harſh and ſteddy voice, 'And what doſt thou think of me, 'that I am in a bagnio? Am I more at eaſe than thy-'ſelf?' Upon this the courtier ſuddenly ſunk under his pains, and dy'd on the ſpot The king, being half roaſted, was carry'd from thence, not ſo much out of pity (for what compaſſion cou'd ever reach ſouls ſo barbarous that, for giving a dubious information of ſome veſſel of gold to be pillag'd, they caus'd not a mere man only, but a king, ſo great both in fortune and merit, to be broil'd before their eyes) but it was becauſe his conſtancy render'd their cruelty ſtill the more ſhameful. They afterwards hang'd him for having had the courage to attempt to ſet himſelf free by force of arms from ſo long a ſtate of captivity and ſubjection; and he made his exit in a manner becoming ſo magnanimous a prince.

At another time they burnt alive, in one and the ſame fire, four hundred and ſixty men, viz. four hundred of the common people, and ſixty of the chief lords of a province, whom they had taken priſoners of war.

Theſe

Theſe narratives we have from themſelves; for they don't only confeſs the facts, but boaſt of, and juſtify 'em: cou'd it be to prove their juſtice or their zeal for their religion? certainly, theſe are methods too different from, and contrary to ſo holy an end. Had it been their view to extend our religion, they wou'd have conſider'd that 'tis not propagated by the poſſeſſion of territories, but of hearts; and wou'd have thought the blood ſpilt by the neceſſities of war too much, without increaſing the effuſion by a ſlaughter, like that of wild beaſts, as univerſal as fire and ſword cou'd make it, having only choſe to ſave as many as they intended to make wretched ſlaves of, to the work and ſervice of their mines: ſo that many of the Spaniſh generals were put to death on the place of conqueſt, by order of the kings of Caſtille, juſtly offended with the horror of their behaviour; and they were almoſt all of them hated and diſeſteem'd. God juſtly permitted that all this great plunder ſhou'd be ſwallow'd up by the ſea in its tranſportation, or by the civil wars, in which they devour'd one another; and the greateſt part of them was bury'd on the ſpot, without gaining any fruit of their victory.

As for the revenue, and what was in the treaſury of a provident and prudent king, the reaſon why it was ſo far ſhort of the hopes thoſe who came before had conceiv'd, and of that abundance of riches which the Spaniards found at their firſt arrival in this new world (for, tho' a great deal was fetch'd from thence, we find it nothing in compariſon of what might be expected) was becauſe the uſe of money was intirely unknown there; and that, by conſequence, their gold was all a dead ſtock, being of no other uſe but for ornament and oſtentation, as ſo much furniture reſerv'd from father to ſon by many powerful kings, who continually exhauſted their mines to form this heap of veſſels and ſtatues for the ornament of their palaces and temples; whereas our gold is all in circulation and traffic. We cut ours into a thouſand bits, caſt it into as many forms, and ſcatter and diſperſe it a thouſand ways. Let us only ſuppoſe that our kings had, in like manner, amaſs'd all the gold

gold they cou'd collect in ſeveral ages, and have let it lain idle by them.

The people of the kingdom of Mexico were ſomewhat more civiliz'd, and greater artiſts than the other nations in that part of the world. They judg'd alſo, as we do, that the univerſe was near its period; and they look'd upon the deſolation we brought amongſt them as a ſign of it. They believ'd the duration of the world to be divided into five ages, under five ſucceſſive ſuns, four of which had already finiſh'd their career, and that that which now gave them light was the fifth. The firſt ſun periſh'd, ſay they, with all other creatures, by a univerſal deluge. The ſecond by the fall of the firmament upon us, which ſuffocated every thing living; and in this age they place the giants, whoſe bones they ſhew'd to the Spaniards; according to the proportion of which the ſtature of men amounted to twenty hands high. The third ſun they ſay was annihilated by a fire, which burnt and conſum'd every thing. The fourth by a commotion of air and wind, which even threw down ſeveral mountains; at which time men did not die, but were transform'd into baboons. What impreſſions will not the lazineſs of human credulity admit! after the extinction of this fourth ſun, the world, ſay they, lay twenty-five Years in continual darkneſs; in the fifteenth year of which were created a man and a woman, who renew'd the human race. Upon a certain day, ten years after this, the ſun appear'd newly created, and from this day begins their computation of years. The third day after it was created, the ancient gods dy'd, and new ones have been born every day ſince. After what manner they think this laſt ſun will periſh my author has not learnt. But their calculation of this fourth change agrees with the great conjunction of the planets, which, eight hundred and odd years ago, as the aſtrologers compute, produc'd many great alterations and innovations in the world.

As to pomp and magnificence, neither Greece, Rome, nor Egypt, can, either for utility, difficulty, or grandeur, compare any of their works with the road made

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in Peru, by the kings of that country, from the city of Quito to that of Cuſeo (three hundred leagues in length) it being ſtrait, even, twenty five paces in breadth, pav'd, and inclos'd on both ſides with noble high walls; along the innermoſt of which two brooks are continually running, with beautiful trees, nam'd Moly, on their banks. In this work, where they met with rocks and mountains, they cut thro' and levell'd them, and fill'd up the chaſms with ſtone and lime. At the end of every day's journey there are fine Palaces, furniſh'd with proviſions, cloaths and arms, as well for travellers as for ſoldiers that paſs that way. In my eſtimation of this work, I have computed the difficulty, which is particularly conſiderable in that place. They did not build with any ſtones leſs than ſuch as were ten foot ſquare, which they had no other way to carry but to drag them along by the ſtrength of their arms; nor did they know ſo much as the art of ſcaffolding, nor had they any other way to go to work but to raiſe the ground with the building, taking away the earth when the whole was erected.

We return now to our coaches. Inſtead of theſe, or any other vehicles, they were carry'd upon men's ſhoulders. The laſt king of Peru, on the day that he was taken, was thus carry'd upon poles or ſtaves of gold, and ſitting in a chair of gold, to the middle of the field of battle. As faſt as theſe chairmen were kill'd in the attempt to diſmount him (for they were determin'd to take him alive) others ſtrove to ſupply the room of thoſe that were kill'd; ſo that they cou'd never get him down, what ſlaughter ſoever they made of thoſe chairmen, till he was ſeiz'd and pull'd to the ground by a man on horſeback

CHAP. II. *Of the Inconvenience of Greatneſs.*

SINCE we cannot attain to't, let us take our revenge by railing at it: Yet to find faults with a thing is not abſolutely railing at it, there being ſome faults in all things how beautiful and deſirable ſoever. In the generality greatneſs has this evident advantage, that it lets itſelf down at pleaſure, and has almoſt the choice of

of either condition. For a man does not fall from all heights, but may come down from the greateſt part of them without falling. Indeed, it ſeems to me that we value it at too high a rate, and that we alſo over-value the reſolution of thoſe whom we have either ſeen or heard to have contemn'd it, or let themſelves down from it of their own accord. Its eſſence is not ſo manifeſtly commodious but it may be refus'd without a miracle. I find it a very hard thing to bear misfortunes, but to be content with a moderate fortune, and to avoid greatneſs, is a thing, in my opinion, of very little trouble. This is a virtue, methinks, to which I, who am no conjurer, could arrive at without much ſtruggle. What then ought they to do who ſhould even put into the ballance the glory attending this refuſal, wherein there may be more ambition lurking than even in the deſire and enjoyment of greatneſs? foraſmuch as ambition never conducts itſelf better, according to its own manner, than by a path which is unfrequented, and out of the road.

I ſpur up my courage to patience, but ſlacken its rein towards deſire. I have as much to wiſh for as another, and allow my wiſhes as much liberty and indiſcretion; but yet it never was my lot to wiſh for either empire or royalty, nor for the eminency of thoſe high and commanding fortunes. I do not aim that way. I love myſelf too well. When I think of growing greater, 'tis but very moderately, and by a conſtrain'd and timorous increaſe, ſuch as is proper for me, in reſolution, in prudence, in health, beauty, and even in wealth. But that reputation, and that ſo mighty authority oppreſs my imagination. And, quite contrary to ſome others I ſhould, perhaps, rather chuſe to be the ſecond or third man in Perigord than the firſt in Paris; at leaſt, without lying, be the third than the firſt officer in Paris. I would neither diſpute with a porter at the gate, a wretch whom I knew not, nor make crowds open to adore me as I paſs. I have been train'd up to a middle rank in life, as well by my inclination as my fortune; and have made it appear, by the whole courſe of my behaviour and undertakings, that I have rather avoided than otherwiſe

to climb above the degree of fortune to which I was born. Every natural conſtitution is equally juſt and eaſy. I have, therefore, ſo mean a ſpirit that I meaſure not good fortune by its height, but by its eaſy attainment.

But if I have not a heart great enough, I am made amends by an open heart, which injoins me boldly to proclaim its weakneſs. Were I deſir'd to compare the life of L. Thorius Balbus, a fine gentleman, learned, healthy; a man of an excellent underſtanding, and abounding in all manner of conveniencies and pleaſures, leading a tranquill life, and all after his own way, with a ſoul duly prepar'd to meet death, and fortify'd againſt ſuperſtition, pain, and other incumbrances of human neceſſity, dying at laſt in battle with his ſword drawn for the defence of his country; ſhould I compare his with the life of M. Regulus, ſo grand and ſublime as every one knows it was together with his admirable exit; the one without name, without dignity, the other exemplary and wonderfully glorious, I ſhould doubtleſs ſay as Cicero did *, could I ſpeak as well as he. But, were I to ſet them together in my own phraſe, I ſhould ſay alſo that the Life of the former is as much, within my capacity and within my deſire, which I make conformable to my capacity, as the latter is beyond it; that I could not approach the laſt without veneration, but to the firſt I ſhould readily attain by habit.

Return we now to our temporal greatneſs, from which we have digreſs'd. I neither like to command nor be commanded. Otanez, one of the ſeven who had a right to lay claim to the kingdom of Perſia, did, as I ſhould readily have done myſelf, i. e. † He gave up to his competitors his right of attaining to it, either by

* Cicero, from whom Montaigne has taken this parallel, plainly gives the preference to Regulus. Thorius, he ſays, wallow'd in pleaſures of every kind, and was a contemner of the ſacrifices and temples of his country: that he was a handſome man, perfectly healthy, and ſo valiant that he dy'd in battle for the cauſe of the republic; inſomuch, adds Cicero, that I dare not name the man who was preferable to him; but virtue ſhall ſpeak for me, who will not heſitate a moment to give M. Regulus the preference, and to proclaim him the more happy man. "De Finib. bon. et mal." lib. ii. c. 20.

† Herodot. lib. iii. p. 222, 223.

election

election or by lot, provided that he and his might live in the empire free of all ſubjection and obedience, that to the ancient laws excepted; and that they might enjoy all liberty that was not to the prejudice thereof, he having as great an averſion to command as to obey.

The moſt painful and difficult employment in the World is, in my opinion, worthily to diſcharge the office of a king. I excuſe more of their failings than men commonly do, in conſideration of the vaſt weight of their function, which really aſtoniſhes me. 'Tis difficult for ſuch boundleſs power to preſerve any decorum. Yet ſo it is that, even to thoſe who are not of the moſt happy diſpoſition, 'tis a ſingular incitement to virtue to be ſtation'd in ſuch a place, where whatever good you do is recorded, and plac'd to account, where the leaſt benefaction extends to ſo many men, and where your talent, like that of preachers, chiefly addreſſes itſelf to the people, who are not very nice judges, eaſily deceiv'd and eaſily ſatisfy'd. There are few things wherein we can give a ſincere judgment, becauſe there are few wherein we have not in ſome ſort a particular intereſt. Superiority and inferiority, command and ſubjection, are naturally liable to envy and cavil, and muſt neceſſarily be continually incroaching upon one another. I believe neither the one nor the other touching its reſpective rights; let reaſon therefore, which is inflexible and diſpaſſionate, when we can find it, determine the caſe. 'Tis ſcarce a month ago that I turn'd over two Scots authors who contended with each other upon this point. He who takes the part of the people renders the condition of a king worſe than that of a carter; and the writer for the monarch lifts him ſome degrees above almighty god in ſovereignty and power.

Now the inconveniency of greatneſs, which I have here taken upon me to conſider upon ſome occaſion that lately put it into my head, is this: there is not, perhaps, any thing more pleaſant in mens dealings with one another than their competitions and contentions, through an emulation of honour and valour, either in the exerciſes of the body or of the mind, wherein ſovereign greatneſs has no real ſhare. Indeed I have often thought, that, out of pure reſpect, men have us'd princes in-

juriouſly and diſdainfully in that particular. For the very thing I was vehemently diſguſted at, when a lad, was to ſee, that thoſe who performed their exerciſes with me forebore to do their beſt, as if they thought me unworthy of ſuch effort; and this is what we ſee happen to them daily, every one thinking himſelf unworthy to contend with them. If we diſcover that they have the leaſt paſſion to get the better, there is not a man that will not make it his buſineſs to give them the victory, and that will not chuſe to betray his own honour rather than offend theirs. They employ no more force in it than is neceſſary to contribute to their honour. What ſhare then have they in an engagement wherein every one is of their ſide? methinks I ſee thoſe paladins of the ancient times preſenting themſelves to the juſts and tournaments, with their bodies and armour inchanted. Briſſon, running againſt Alexander, purpoſely made a fault * in his career, for which Alexander chid him, but he ought to have whipp'd him. Upon this account Carneades ſaid † "That the ſons of princes learn'd nothing right but "how to ride the manag'd horſe, by reaſon that in all "other exerciſes every one bends and yields to them; "but a horſe, being neither a flatterer nor a courtier, "makes no more ſcruple to fling the ſon of a king "than the brat of a porter." Homer was forc'd to conſent that Venus, ſo perfect, ſoft, and delicate a beauty, ſhould be wounded at the battle of Troy, for the ſake of aſcribing courage and boldneſs to her, qualities never known in thoſe who are exempt from danger. The gods are made to be angry, to fear, to run away, to be jealous, to grieve, and to be tranſported with paſſion, to honour them with the virtues that amongſt us are compoſed of thoſe imperfections. He

* Plutarch in his treatiſe, "How a Flatterer may be diſtinguiſh'd from a Friend," where this man, who ſuffer'd Alexander to conquer him, is call'd Criſſon inſtead of Briſſon, as it is ſpelt in all the editions of Montaigne that I have met with. Indeed in Plutarch's tract, intitled, "Of the Satisfaction or "Tranquility of the Mind," 'tis ſpelt Βρίσων, in the Paris edit. fol. anno 1624. But 'tis an error of the preſs, becauſe in the Latin verſion, which accompanies it, Xylander has put Criſon.

† Plutarch, ibid. c. 15.

He that does not participate in the hazard and difficulty cannot pretend to an intereſt in the honour and pleaſure that attend hazardous actions. 'Tis pity you ſhould have ſuch a power that all things give way to you. Your fortune throws ſociety and good fellowſhip too far from you, and plants you in too great a ſolitude. That eaſineſs, that mean facility of making all things ſtoop to you, is an enemy to all manner of pleaſure. 'Tis ſliding, not going; 'tis ſleeping, not living. Conceive a man accompany'd with omnipotence, you plunge him in an abyſs, and put him under a neceſſity of begging moleſtation and oppoſition from you as an alms. His being and his welfare are in a ſtate of indigence. The good qualities of kings are dead and loſt for theſe are only to be perceiv'd by compariſon, and we put them out of the way of it. Their ears are ſo tingled with a continual uniform approbation, that they have ſcarce any knowledge of true praiſe. Have they to do with the greateſt fool of all their ſubjects? They have no way to take advantage of him: by his ſaying, "'Tis becauſe he is my king," he thinks he has ſaid enough to imply that he therefore ſuffer'd himſelf to be overcome. This quality ſtifles and conſumes the other true and eſſential qualities, which are ſunk deep in the kingſhip, and leaves them nothing to ſet themſelves off but actions that are actually contiguous and ſubſervient to royalty, viz. the functions of their office. 'Tis ſo much to be a king, that he is only ſo by that very denomination. This ſtrange luſtre that ſurrounds him, conceals him, and robs us of the view of him. Our ſight is thereby repell'd and and diſſipated, being engroſs'd and dazzled by this glaring ſplendor. The ſenate awarded the prize of eloquence to Tiberius, but he refus'd it, as thinking that, tho' the award had been ever ſo juſt, he cou'd not have a true reliſh of it from a judgment ſo reſtrain'd.

As we yield them all the advantages of honour, ſo do we ſooth and give a ſanction to their very defects and vices, not only by approbation, but even by imitation. Every one of Alexander's attendants carry'd their heads on one ſide as he did. And the flatterers

of * Dionyſius ran foul of one another in his preſence, ſtumbled at, and kick'd up every thing in their way, to denote that they were as purblind as he. Even ruptures have ſometimes been a recommendation to favour. I have actually ſeen deafneſs affected; and, where the ſovereign hated his wife, Plutarch § obſerv'd that the courtiers actually divorc'd theirs, whom they lov'd. And, what is yet more, uncleanneſs, and all manner of diſſolution, diſloyalty, blaſphemy, cruelty, hereſy, ſuperſtition, irreligion, effeminacy, and worſe crimes, if worſe there can be, have at times been the reigning faſhion; and by an example yet more pernicious than that of the flatterers of Mithridates, who, † becauſe their ſovereign pretended to the honour of being a good phyſician, came to him to have inciſions and cauſtics apply'd to their bodies; for thoſe others ſuffer'd their ſouls, a more noble and delicate part, to be cauteris'd. But to conclude the ſubject I began with, Adrian, the emperor, diſputing with the philoſopher Favorinus about the meaning of a word, Favorinus ſoon yielded him the point; for which his friends blaming him, "You talk ſimply, ſaid he, would you make me "believe that he who commands thirty legions, is not "a man of more learning than I am? ‖ Auguſtus "wrote, verſes againſt Aſinius Pollio; And I, ſaid "Pollio, ſay nothing, for 'tis not prudent to take up "the pen againſt him who has power to proſcribe." And theſe were both in the right. For Dionyſius, becauſe he could ¶ not equal Philoxenus in poetry, and

* Plut. Of the difference betwixt the flatterer and the friend.

§ Plutarch only ſays that he knew a man who, becauſe his friend divorc'd his wife, turn'd away his wife alſo, whom, nevertheleſs, he went to viſit, and ſent for ſometimes privately to his houſe, which was diſcover'd by the very wife of his friend, Plutarch of the difference betwixt the flatterer and the friend, c. 8. of Amyot's tranſlation.

† Plutarch, ibid. c. 13.

‖ Ælii Spartiani Adrianus Cæſar, p. 7 and 8, Hiſt. Aug.

¶ Or rather becauſe he was not able to bear the ſlight opinion which Philoxenus ſhew'd of his poetry. Diodorus of Sicily, lib. xi. c. 2. ſays, that one day, at ſupper-time, as they were reading ſome worthleſs poems of this tyrant, that excellent poet Philoxenus, being charg'd to give his opinion of them, was too free in his anſwer to pleaſe Dionyſius, for which the tyrant was ſo much

and Plato * in reaſoning, condemn'd the one to the quarries, and ſent the other to the iſle Ægina to be ſold for a ſlave.

CHAP. III. *Of the Art of Diſcourſing.*

'TIS the cuſtom of our juſtice to condemn ſome for a warning to others. To condemn them for no other reaſon but becauſe they have done amiſs, were downright ſtupidity, as Plato ſays, for what is done cannot be undone; but 'tis to the end they may offend no more, and that others may not commit the like offence. We do not reform the man whom we hang, but we reform others by him. I do the ſame. My errors are ſometimes natural, and neither to be corrected nor remedy'd; but the benefit which virtuous men do the public, by making themſelves imitated, I may do, perhaps, in making my conduct avoided.

Nonne vides Albi ut malè vivat filius, utque
Barrus inops? magnum documentum, ne patriam rem
Perdere quis velit †.

Don't you behold the wealthy Albus' ſon,
How wretchedly he lives, how he's undone!
There's Barrus too, how ſhabby is he grown!
Barrus the greateſt rake of all the town:
A good inſtruction for young heirs, that they
Should not their patrimony fool away.

Whilſt I proclaim and condemn my own imperfections, another perſon will be taught to fear them. The parts that I moſt eſteem in myſelf derive more honour from accuſing, than from recommending myſelf; which is the

much incens'd againſt him that he order'd him to be ſent immediately to the quarries.

* Montaigne is miſtaken here with regard to Plato, who was ſold a ſlave in the iſland of Ægina, by order of Dionyſius the tyrant, becauſe he had ſpoke too freely to him; as Diodorus of Sicily ſays poſitively, lib. xv. c. 2. and more particularly alſo Diog. Laert. in the life of Plato, lib. iii. ſect. 18, 19. In theſe two laſt notes the fault I have found with Montaigne I might, indeed, have as well plac'd to the account of Plutarch, who ſays the very ſame thing as Montaigne in his treatiſe "Of Contentment, or peace of the Mind," c. 12. yet I cannot but think that Plutarch has here been guilty of ſome inaccuracy of expreſſion. † Hor. lib. i. ſat. 4. v. 109, &c.

the reaſon I the oftner relapſe and ſtick to them. But, when all is ſaid and done, a man never ſpeaks of himſelf without loſs. Self-condemnation is always believ'd, but ſelf-praiſe never. There may, peradventure, be ſome of my own conſtitution, who inſtruct me better by contrariety than by ſimilitude, and more by avoiding than imitating me. This was that ſort of diſcipline which the elder Cato had in his thoughts, when he ſaid, that "Wiſe men have more to learn of fools, than "fools of wiſe men:" and that ancient player upon the harp, who, Pauſanias ſaid, us'd to compel his ſcholars to go and hear one that lodg'd oppoſite to him, who play'd very ill, that they might thereby learn to hate his diſcords and falſe meaſures. The horror of cruelty more inclines me to mercy than any example of clemency could poſſibly do. A good riding-maſter does not ſo much mend my ſeat in the ſaddle as an attorney, or a Venetian gondolier on horſeback; and a ſorry ſpeaker reforms my language better than a good one. The ſilly look of another perſon always advertiſes and adviſes me; and that which is pungent awakes and rouſes much better than what is pleaſing. 'Tis fit time for us to reform the backward way by diſagreement rather than by agreement, by diſcord rather than accord. As I learn little by good examples, I make uſe of bad, which are very common. I have endeavour'd to render myſelf as agreeable as I ſee others offenſive, as conſtant as I ſee others fickle, as affable as I ſee others rough, as good as I ſee others wicked; but I propoſed to myſelf meaſures invincible.

The moſt fruitful and natural exerciſe of the mind, in my opinion, is converſation, the uſe of which I find to be more agreeable than any other exerciſe in life. For this reaſon, were I now forc'd to make my choice at this inſtant, I hink I ſhould agree rather to loſe my ſight than my hearing, or my ſpeech. The Athenians and the Romans alſo held this exerciſe in great honour in their academies: and the Italians to this day retain ſome footſteps of it to their great advantage.

The ſtudy of books is a languid, feeble motion, that does not warm, whereas converſation at once inſtructs and exerciſes. If I diſcourſe with a man of ſtrong ſenſe,

ſenſe, and a ſhrewd diſputant, he ſmites me hip and thigh, goads me on the right and left, and his imaginations give vigour to mine. Envy, glory, contention, ſtimulate, and raiſe me above myſelf; whereas an uniſon of judgment is a quality that is a perfect nuiſance in converſation. But as the mind gathers ſtrength, by the communication of vigorous and regular underſtandings, 'tis not to be expreſſed how much it loſes and degenerates by the continual correſpondence and company which we keep with ſuch whoſe imaginations are vulgar and diſtemper'd. There is no contagion which ſpreads like that. I have ſufficient reaſon to know the evil of it by dear experience. I love to diſcourſe and diſpute; but its with few men only, and for my own ſake; for to be put up as a ſpectacle before a great aſſembly, and to make a parade and boaſting of a man's flow of wit and words, is, I think, very unbecoming a perſon of honour.

Nonſenſe is a ſcurvy quality, but not to be able to bear with it, and to fret and vex at it as I do, is another ſort of diſeaſe, altogether as troubleſome as nonſenſe: and this is the very thing of which I will now accuſe myſelf. I enter into a conference and diſpute with great freedom and eaſe, foraſmuch as opinion meets in me with a ſoil very unfit for penetration, and too hard for it to take any deep root in it. No propoſitions aſtoniſh me, no belief offends me, how contrary ſoever it be to my own. There is no fancy ſo frivolous and extravagant that does not ſeem to me to be very ſuitable to the product of the human underſtanding. As for ſuch of us, who deprive our judgment of the right of making decrees, we look upon the various opinions with indifference; and if we don't incline our judgment to them, yet we readily lend an ear to them. Where one ſcale of the ballance is quite empty, I let the other waver under the dreams of an old woman: and I think myſelf excuſable if I chuſe the odd number, Thurſday rather than Friday; if I had rather be the twelfth or fourteenth than the thirteenth at table; if I had rather, on a journey, ſee a hare run by me than croſs my road, and that my ſtocking be put on my left foot firſt: All ſuch whimſies as are current about

us, deſerve at leaſt to be hearken'd unto. As to me they are all mere vanity, and that is what they really import. Moreover, vulgar and caſual opinions, conſider'd in their weight, are, indeed, ſomething more than nothing in nature. And he who will not ſuffer himſelf to proceed ſo far, falls, peradventure, into the vice of obſtinacy, for the ſake of avoiding that of ſuperſtition. The contradictions of judgments, therefore, do neither offend nor alter me; they only awake and exerciſe me. We ſhun correction, whereas we ought to put our ſelves in the way of it, eſpecially when it comes by way of conference, and not of authority. As to every oppoſition, we don't conſider whether it be juſt but how we ſhall, right or wrong, diſengage ourſelves from it. Inſtead of extending our arms we thruſt out our claws. I could ſuffer myſelf to be roughly handled by my friends telling me that I am a fool and a dreamer. I love to hear gentlemen ſpeak, as they think, with courage. We muſt fortify and harden our organ of hearing againſt this ceremonious ſound of words. I love a ſtrong and manly familiarity and converſation; a friendſhip that is pleas'd with the ſharpneſs and vigour of its communication, as love is with biting and ſcratching. 'Tis not vigorous nor generous enough if it be not quarrelſome, if it be civiliz'd and artificial, if it treads gingerly, and is afraid of a ſhock. "Neque enim diſputari "ſine reprehenſione poteſt*." Nor can there be any diſputation without contradiction. When I am contradicted, it rouſes my attention, but not my indignation. I incline towards him who contradicts and inſtructs me. The cauſe of truth ought to be the common cauſe of both the one and the other. What anſwer will he make? the paſſion of anger has already given a blow to his judgment. Anguiſh has taken poſſeſſion of it before reaſon. It would be of ſervice that our diſputes were decided by wagers; that there might be a material mark put upon what we loſt, to the end that we might keep an account of it, and that my man might tell me, "My ignorance and obſtinacy coſt me "laſt year a hundred crowns at ſeveral times. I cheriſh and careſs truth in what hand ſoever I find it; I chearfully

* Cicero de finibus bon. et mal. lib. i.

fully ſurrender to it; I open my conquer'd arms to it as far off as I can ſee it approaching, and I take a pleaſure in being reprov'd, provided it be not with an air too deriding and imperious. And I accommodate myſelf to my accuſers more frequently for civility ſake than for the ſake of amendment, chuſing to gratify and encourage a freedom to admoniſh me, by my ready ſubmiſſion to it. Nevertheleſs it is hard to bring the men of my time to it. They have not the courage to correct, becauſe they can't bear to be corrected themſelves. And they always ſpeak with diſſimulation in one anothers preſence. I take ſo great a pleaſure in being judg'd and known, that 'tis in a manner indifferent to me in which of the two forms I am ſo. My imagination does ſo often contradict and condemn itſelf, that 'tis all one to me if another do it, eſpecially conſidering that I grant no more authority than what I think fit to his reproof. But I am angry with the man who is ſo ſurly, which I know ſome are as to be ſorry for his admonition if it be not credited, and takes it for an affront if it be not immediately follow'd. Whereas Socrates always receiv'd the contradictions to his arguments with a ſmile; it may be ſaid that his ſtrength of reaſon was the cauſe, and that, the advantage being certain of falling on his ſide, he accepted them as matter of new victory. Nevertheleſs we ſee, on the contrary, that there is nothing in the caſe that renders our ſentiments ſo delicate as an inclination to pre-eminence, and a diſdain of the adverſary; and that, therefore, the weaker diſputant has reaſon to take, in good part, thoſe contradictions that correct and ſet him right. In earneſt, I rather chuſe to keep company with thoſe who gall me than thoſe who fear me. 'Tis an inſipid and a hurtful pleaſure to have to do with people who admire and make way for us. Antiſthenes commanded his children "Never to take it kindly, or as a favour, from "any man who commended them *." I find I am much

* Plutarch of falſe Shame, c. 12. Ὁ Ἀντισθένης Ἡρακλῆς παρήνει τοῖς παισὶ διακελευόμενος μηδενὶ χάριν ἔχειν ἐπαινοῦντι αὐτούς. Montaigne has confounded this Antiſthenius, or Antiſtheneus

much prouder of a victory which I gain over myſelf, when in the very heat of the contention, I ſurrender myſelf to the ſtrength of my adverſary's argument, than I feel pleaſure in a victory which I obtain over him by means of his weakneſs. In ſhort I receive and admit of all manner of attacks that are direct, how weak ſoever; but I am quite out of patience with thoſe that are not made in form. I little care what the ſubject is; the opinions are all one to me, and the victory is to me a thing almoſt indifferent. I can argue a whole day together peaceably if the debate be carry'd on with order. I do not require ſtrength and ſubtility ſo much as method; I mean the order which is every day obſerv'd in the wranglings of ſhepherds and ſhop-boys, but never among us. If they ſtart from the ſubject 'tis uncivil in them; and yet 'tis no more than what we do ourſelves: but their tumult and impatience does not carry them from their point. They purſue the thread of their argument. If they prevent, and do not ſtay for one another, they at leaſt underſtand one another. Any one anſwers too well for me, if he anſwer what I ſay. But when the diſpute is confus'd and irregular, I quit the ſubſtance, and adhere to the form with anger and indiſcretion, and fall into a teſty, malicious, and imperious way of diſputing, of which I am afterwards aſham'd. 'Tis impoſſible to deal ſincerely with a fool. My judgment is not only deprav'd under the hand of ſo impetuous a maſter, but my conſcience alſo.

Our diſputes ought to be prohibited and puniſh'd as well as other verbal crimes. * What vice do they not create

tiſtheneus, as the Latin tranſlation of Plutarch calls him, with the chief of the Cynic ſect, who never had the ſurname of Hercules, which Plutarch gives to Antiſthenius, and is conſtantly call'd Antiſthenes.

* The deſcription which Montaigne gives, from this place to the mark †, in the next page, of the faults that commonly attend our diſputes, is very juſt, and very agreeably expreſs'd. Pere Bouhours was ſo pleas'd with it, that he has inſerted it almoſt verbatim in lib. iii. of his Art de Penſer, c. 20. § 7. but without directly aſcribing the honour of it to Montaigne, whom he only points out by the vague character of the celebrated Author; whereas he ought moſt certainly to have nam'd Montaigne expreſly,

create and accumulate, being always govern'd and commanded by paſſion? we firſt quarrel with the arguments, and then with the men. We learn to diſpute purely for the ſake of contradicting; and, whilſt every one contradicts, and is contradicted, it falls out that all that is got by the diſpute is the loſs and annihilation of the truth. Plato, therefore, in his republic, prohibits this exerciſe to fools and ill-bred people. To what end do you go about to enquire into a ſubject of one who knows not any thing that is worth knowing? 'Tis doing no injury to the ſubject when a man leaves it in order to ſee which way to treat it. I do not mean a way that is artful and ſcholaſtic, but one that is natural and obvious to a ſolid underſtanding. What will it be in the end? one goes to the eaſt, the other to the weſt. They loſe the main point, and ſcatter it in a crowd of incidents. After ſtorming for an hour they know not what they are looking for. One is low, the other high, and a third ſideling. One is taken with a word and a ſimile: another is no longer ſenſible of the oppoſition made to him, he is ſo engag'd in his purſuit, and thinks of following his own courſe, and not yours: another finding himſelf too weak to hold the argument, fears all, refuſes all, and, at the very beginning, mixes and confounds the ſubject, or, in the very height of the diſpute, ſtops ſhort and grows ſilent by a peeviſh ignorance, affecting a haughty contempt or a ſilly modeſty of avoiding contention. This man, provided he ſtrikes, cares not how much he lays himſelf open. The other counts his very words, and weighs them for reaſons. Another is beholding only to his (Stentor-like) voice, and his lungs. Here's one that draws inferences againſt himſelf, and another that deafens you with prefaces, and impertinent digreſſions†. Another falls into down right railing, and picks a quarrel for nothing, in order to get clear of the company and converſation of a wit that is too hard for him. This laſt looks not into the reaſon of things, but draws

expreſly, eſpecially after having juſt criticis'd him in the ſame chapter with great ſeverity, to call it no worſe, when he not only quoted his words, but nam'd him without any ſcruple.

draws a line of circumvallation about you, with the logic of his clauſes, and the rules of his art.

Who now does not enter into a diſtruſt of the ſciences, and doubt whether he can reap any ſolid advantage from them for the neceſſities of life, conſidering the uſe we put them to. "Nihil ſanantibus literis*," as Seneca calls it. Who has got underſtanding by logic? Where are all its fine promiſes? "Nec ad melius vivendum, nec ad commodius diſſerendum," i. e. It neither makes a man live better, nor diſcourſe more pertinently. Is there more balderdaſh in the brawls of fiſhwomen than in the public diſputes of the men of this profeſſion? I ſhould rather that a ſon of mine ſhould learn the language of the taverns than the babble of the ſchools. Take a maſter of arts, and diſcourſe with him, does he not make us ſenſible of this artificial excellency; does he not captivate the women, and ſuch ignoramus's as we are, by the admiration of the ſtrength of his reaſons, and the beauty of his method? does he not govern and perſuade us as he will? why does a man, who has ſo great advantage in matter and management, mix railing, indiſcretion, and rage, in his diſputations? ſtrip him of his gown, his hood, and his Latin; let him not batter our ears with Ariſtotle, in his Puris naturalibus, you will take him for one of us, or worſe. By that complication and confuſion of language with which they overpower us, they appear in the light of juglers, whoſe feats of activity ſtrike and impoſe upon our ſenſes, but do not at all ſhock our belief; and, their ſleight of hand excepted, they do nothing but what is common and mean. They are not the leſs fools for their being more learn'd; I love and honour knowledge as much as they who poſſeſs it; and, if a right uſe be made of it 'tis the moſt noble and powerful acquiſition of mortals: But in thoſe (of whom there's an infinite number of the kind) who eſtabliſh their ſufficiency and value upon that baſis, who appeal from their underſtanding to their memory, "Sub alienâ umbrâ latentes†," and can do nothing but by book, I hate it, if I may venture to

* Seneca, ep 59. † Seneca, ep. 33 i. e. Who are always tranſlators and never authors.

to ſay it, ſomething worſe than ſtupidity itſelf. In my country, and in my time, learning has improv'd fortune ſufficiently, but the mind not at all. If it meets with dull ſouls it overcharges and ſuffocates them, leaving them a crude and undigeſted maſs; but, as for ſuch as are free of all clogs, it readily purifies, clarifies, and ſubtilizes them even to exanition. 'Tis a thing of a quality almoſt indifferent; a very uſeful accompliſhment to a ſublime ſoul, but to others pernicious and miſchievous, or rather a thing of very precious uſe, that will not ſuffer itſelf to be purchaſed at a low rate. In ſome hands 'tis a ſceptre, in others a rattle.

But to proceed: what greater victory do you hope for than to convince your enemy that he is not able to encounter you? When you get the better of your poſition, 'tis truth that wins; when you get the advantage of order and method 'tis you that win. I am of opinion that, in Plato and Xenophon, Socrates diſputes more for the ſake of the diſputants than of the diſpute, and more to inſtruct Euthydemus and Protagoras in the knowledge of their impertinence than in the impertinence of their art. He graſps at the firſt ſubject, like one who has a more profitable aim than to explain it, namely to clear the underſtandings which he takes upon him to cultivate and exerciſe. 'Tis our proper buſineſs to be ſtirring, and upon the hunt after truth; and, if we proſecute the chace ill and impertinently, we are inexcuſable. To fail in ſeizing it is another thing For we are born to ſearch after truth tho' it is the province of a greater power to poſſeſs it. 'Tis not, as Democritus ſaid, conceal'd in the unfathomable deeps, but rather elevated to an infinite height in the divine knowledge. The world is but a ſchool of inquiry. 'Tis not who ſhall enter the field, but who ſhall perform the beſt courſes. He may as well play the fool who ſpeaks the truth, as he who utters a falſhood; for we are upon the manner, not the matter of ſpeaking. 'Tis my humour to regard the form as much as the ſubſtance, and the advocate as much as the cauſe, according to the rule laid down by Alcibiades. And I amuſe myſelf every day in reading authors, without minding their learning; their method being what I look

for, not their ſubject. Juſt ſo too I hunt after the converſation of ſome celebrated genius; not that he may teach me, but that I may know him; and that then, if he be worth it, I may imitate him. 'Tis in every man's power to ſpeak truly, but the talent of a few only to ſpeak methodically, prudently, and fully. By conſequence, the falſity which proceeds from ignorance, does not offend me, but the folly of it. I have broke off ſeveral advantageous bargains by reaſon of the impertinent wrangling of thoſe with whom I treated. I am not mov'd once in a year at the faults of thoſe over whom I have any power; but for the ſtupidity and obſtinacy of their allegations, and their fooliſh and brutiſh excuſes, we are every day ready to ſeize one another by the collar. They neither underſtand what is ſaid nor why, and anſwer accordingly, which is enough to make a man mad. I never feel any ſevere ſhock in my head but when 'tis knock'd by another head; and am more ready to compound for the crimes of my domeſtics than their raſhneſs, impertinence, and folly. Let them do leſs, provided they are capable of doing it as it ought. You live in hopes of warming their affection to you; but for a blockhead, there's nothing, worth having, to be had, or hop'd for.

But what if I take things otherwiſe than they are? 'Tis poſſible I may; and, therefore, I accuſe my own impatience; and hold, in the firſt place, that ſuch impatience is as vicious in him who is in the right as in him who is in the wrong. For 'tis always a tyrannical ſourneſs not to be able to bear a form different from one's own: and, beſides, there really is not a greater, more conſtant, and a more unaccountable folly than to be mov'd and provok'd at the follies of mankind; for it chiefly makes us quarrel with ourſelves, and the ancient philoſopher never wanted occaſion for his tears whilſt he conſider'd himſelf. Miſo *, one of the ſeven ſages, who was of the temper of Timon and Democritus, being aſk'd "what he laugh'd at, being alone? "made anſwer, for the very reaſon becauſe I laugh a-"lone.' How many ſilly things, in my opinion, do I ſay and anſwer every day of my life; and then how many more according to the opinion of others? If I bite my

* Diog. Laert. in the life of Miſo, lib. 1. § 108.

my own lips at it, what muſt others do? in ſhort, we muſt live among the living, and let the river run unde the bridge without our care, or at leaſt without our be ing diſturb'd. To ſpeak the truth, how comes it that we can meet a man with a hump back, or any other deformity, without being angry at it; and can't bear to meet with a perſon who is of a wrong head, without putting ourſelves into a paſſion? this criminal ſourneſs ſticks more to the judge than to the crime. Let us always have this ſaying of Plato in our mouths, "Do "not I think things wrong becauſe I am wrong my- "ſelf? am not I myſelf in fault? may not my admo- "nition rebound upon myſelf?" a wiſe and divine check this, which laſhes the moſt univerſal and common error of mankind. Not only the reproaches that we caſt upon one another, but our reaſons alſo; our arguments and controverſies are generally liable to be retorted upon us, and we are hurt with our own weapons. Of this antiquity has left me very grave examples. It was ſaid ingeniouſly, and very pertinently by Eraſmus, in his adagies, "Stercus cuique ſuum bene "olet." We ſee nothing behind us. We expoſe ourſelves to laughter a hundred times a day, while we laugh at our Neighbour, and deteſt in others the very faults that are more conſpicuous in ourſelves, and which we admire with wonderful impudence and inadvertency. It was but yeſterday that I ſaw a man of good ſenſe pleaſantly and juſtly ridiculing the folly of another who batters the ears of all companies with the catalogue of his genealogies and alliances, above half of them falſe (for they whoſe titles are moſt dubious and uncertain, are the moſt apt to fall upon ſuch ridiculous topics) and, at the ſame time, had he look'd at home, he would have found, that he was altogether as intemperate and impertinent in publiſhing and crying up the pedigree of his wife. Oh! the impertinent aſſurance with which the wife ſees herſelf arm'd by her own huſband! if he underſtood Latin we ſhould ſay to him,

Ageſis hæc non inſanit ſatis ſuâ ſponte, inſtiga *.

If of herſelf ſhe be not mad enough,
Be ſure to urge her to the utmoſt proof.

* Ter. Andria, act 4. ſcene 2 v. 9.

I do not ſay that no man ſhould accuſe who is not clear himſelf; for then no one would ever accuſe, not even he that is clear from the ſame ſort of ſtain; but I mean, that while our judgment falls upon another whoſe name is then in queſtion, it does not exempt us from an internal and ſevere juriſdiction. 'Tis an office of charity that the man who cannot reclaim himſelf from a vice, ſhould, nevertheleſs endeavour to remove it in another, in whom, perhaps, it may not have taken ſo deep and malignant a root. Neither do I think it a pertinent anſwer to him, who admoniſhes me of my fault, to tell him that he is guilty of the ſame. What does this ſignify? the admonition is, notwithſtanding, true and uſeful. If we had a good noſe our ordure would be the more offenſive to us becauſe it is our own. And Socrates is of opinion, that whoever ſhould find himſelf, his ſon, and a ſtranger, guilty of any violence and wrong, ought to begin with himſelf, to preſent himſelf firſt to the ſentence of juſtice; and, in order to purge himſelf, to implore the aſſiſtance of the hangman. The ſon ſhould take place next, and then the ſtranger. If this precept ſeem a little too ſevere, he ought, at leaſt, to preſent himſelf the firſt to the ſting of his own conſcience.

The ſenſes which perceive things only by the external accidents, are our proper and firſt judges; and 'tis no wonder if, in all the parts of our ſocial duty, there is ſo perpetual and univerſal a mixture of ceremonies and ſuperficial appearances, inſomuch that therein conſiſts the beſt and moſt effectual part of our civil government. 'Tis ſtill man with whom we have to do, whoſe condition is wonderfully corporeal. As for thoſe who, of late years, have aim'd to erect ſuch a contemplative and immaterial an exerciſe of religion for us, let them not wonder if there be ſome who think it had ſlipp'd and vaniſh'd thro' their fingers, had it not continued among us, as a mark, title, and inſtrument of diviſion and partition, more than by itſelf. As in a conference, the gravity, the robe, and the fortune of the ſpeaker, often gives a reputation to vain and ſilly arguments; 'tis not to be preſum'd, but that a gentleman ſo attended, and that ſtrikes ſuch an awe, has ſome ſufficiency in him

him that is more than common; and that the man, to whom the king has given ſo many commiſſions and offices, a man of ſo ſolemn and ſupercilious a countenance, muſt be a perſon of greater abilities than another who ſalutes him at a great diſtance, and who has no employment. Not only the words, but the grimaces of thoſe people, are conſider'd, and put to the account, every one making it his buſineſs to give them ſome fine and ſolid conſtruction. If they condeſcend to common converſation, and you offer them any thing but approbation and reverence, they knock you down with the authority of their experience: they have heard, they have ſeen, they have done ſo and ſo; you are cruſh'd with examples. I ſhould chuſe to tell them that the fruit of a ſurgeon's experience is not the hiſtory of his practice, and his calling to mind that he has cur'd four people of the plague, and three of the gout, unleſs he knows how to extract ſomething from it on which to form his judgment, and make us ſenſible that he is thereby become the wiſer in the uſe of his art. As in a concert of muſic, we don't hear a lute, a harpſichord, and a flute alone, but one circular harmony of all the inſtruments together. If they are improv'd by travelling, or by their poſts, their underſtanding will make it appear. 'Tis not enough to count the experiments: they muſt be weigh'd and ſorted, digeſted and diſtill'd, in order to extract the arguments and inferences which they carry with them. There were never ſo many hiſtorians. 'Tis always good and uſeful to attend to them, for they furniſh us every where with excellent and commendable inſtructions from the magazine of their memory, which, doubtleſs, is of great importance to the ſupport of life. But 'tis not this we ſeek for now: we examine whether theſe relaters and collectors of things are commendable themſelves. I hate every kind of tyranny, both in words and deeds. I heartily ſet myſelf againſt thoſe vain circumſtances which deceive our judgment thro' the ſenſes; and, whilſt I narrowly obſerve theſe extraordinary grandees, I find, that at beſt, they are but men as others are.

Rarus enim fermè ſenſus communis in illâ
Fortunâ *.

——————— for 'tis rare
If wealth uncommon, common ſenſe can ſhare.

Peradventure, we think them leſs than they are, by reaſon they undertake more, and make a greater parade, and at the ſame time don't perform what they engag'd in. There muſt be more vigour and ſtrength in the bearer than the burden. He who has not exerted his full ſtrength leaves you to gueſs whether he has ſtill more ſtrength, and whether he has been try'd to the utmoſt of what he is able to perform. He who ſinks under his burden diſcovers the meaſure of his ſtrength, and the weakneſs of his ſhoulders. This is the reaſon that we find ſo many more ſilly mortals among the learned than there are others. Some of them would have made good huſbandmen, good merchants, and good artificers: their ſtock of natural vigour was proportion'd to thoſe callings. Knowledge is a thing of great weight: they faint under it. Their genius has neither vigour nor dexterity enough to diſplay and diſtribute this rich and powerful matter, nor to make uſe and advantage of it. It has no prevailing virtue but in a ſtrong nature; and ſuch natures are very rare. And the weak ones, ſays Socrates, ſpoil the dignity of philoſophy by handling it. It appears uſeleſs and vicious when 'tis not well plac'd†. Thus it is that they ſpoil and make fools of themſelves.

Humani qualis ſimulator Simius oris,
Quem puer, arridens, pretioſo ſtamine Serum
Velavit, nudaſque nates ac terga reliquit,
Ludibrium menſis ‖.
Juſt like the ape, that in us face does bear
Of man the counterfeited character.
Which boys, for ſport, with ſilken veſt attire,
But leave its buttocks bald as head of friar.

Nor is it enough for thoſe who govern and command us, who

* Juv. Sat. 8. v. 73. † Like precious liquor which is ſpoil'd if pour'd into a veſſel that is not clean.
"Sincerum eſt niſi vas, quodcunque infundis, aceſcit."
Tainted veſſels ſour their contents.
‖ Claudian in Eutr. p. lib. i. v. 303, &c.

who have the world, as we ſay, in a ſtring, to be men of common underſtanding, and to be able to do what we can; for if they are not very much ſuperior to us they are far below us, ſince as they promiſe more they ought to perform more.

And yet ſilence in them not only gives them an air of reſpect and gravity, but often alſo conduces to their profit and ſervice: for Megabyſus going one day to ſee Apelles in his painting room, ſat ſtill a long time without ſpeaking a word; but at laſt, beginning to diſcourſe of his performances, he receiv'd this harſh reprimand from him: 'whilſt thou waſt ſilent* thou ſeemedſt to 'be ſome perſon of great account, becauſe of thy 'chains, and thy pompous appearance; but now that 'we have heard thee ſpeak, there is not the meaneſt 'boy in my work-ſhop that does not deſpiſe thee.' His magnificent habit, and his great ſtate, condemned his ignorance the more, while he talk'd of painting ſo impertinently. He ought to have ſaid nothing at all, and not betray'd his ſuperficial and conjectural knowledge. How many fools, in my time, have paſs'd for men of prudence and capacity, by reaſon of their gravity and taciturnity!

Dignities and offices are of neceſſity conferr'd more by fortune than by merit, and kings are often blam'd for it wrongfully. On the contrary, 'tis a wonder that they ſhould have ſo much fortune with ſo little ſkill.

Principis eſt virtus maxima, noſſe ſuos. †
No greater virtue can a prince enjoy
Than well to know the men he would employ.

For nature has not given them a ſight that can extend to ſo many people, to diſcern where lies the preference, and to penetrate into our breaſts, where our will and worth are beſt to be known. They muſt make choice of us by conjecture and trial; by our family, wealth, learning, and by the voice of the people; all very weak arguments. Whoever could find out a way to form a right judgment of this, and to chuſe men by reaſon, would, by ſo doing, eſtabliſh a perfect form of government.

Nay

* Plutarch in his treatiſe, "How to diſtinguiſh the flatterer from the friend," c. 14. † Martial. lib. viii. epig. 15. v. ult.

Nay more, he has brought this grand affair to a point. This is ſaying ſomething, but not enough: for this opinion is juſtly admitted, that we are not to judge of counſels by events. The Carthaginians * puniſh'd their generals for giving wrong advice, tho' it was attended with happy ſucceſs: and the people of Rome often refus'd a triumph for great and very advantageous victories, becauſe ſuch ſucceſs was not to be expected from the general's conduct. We commonly ſee in the tranſactions of the world, that fortune, to ſhew us her power in all things, and which takes pleaſure in mortifying our preſumption, not being able to make fools wiſe, ſhe makes them happy in ſpite of virtue, and is forward to favour thoſe operations which are moſt purely of her own plan. From hence it is that we daily ſee the ſimpleſt amongſt us bring very great buſineſs, both public and private, to an iſſue: and as Sirannez †, the Perſian, made anſwer to thoſe who wonder'd how his affairs ſucceeded ſo ill, conſidering that his deliberations were ſo wiſe: " that he was ſole maſter of his purpoſes, but " the ſucceſs of his affairs was wholly in the power of " fortune ‖. Theſe may return the ſame anſwer, but with a contrary bias. Moſt of the affairs of this world are perfom'd by accidents.

Fata viam inveniunt ¶.

The fates are ſure to find a way.

The event does often juſtify a very fooliſh conduct. Our interpoſition is as it were but a thing of courſe, and more commonly a conſideration of uſe and example than of reaſon. Being amaz'd at the greatneſs of a deed, I have formerly been acquainted, by thoſe who have perform'd it, of their motives and their addreſs, and have found nothing therein but very ordinary advice; and the moſt common and cuſtomary are alſo, perhaps, the moſt ſure and convenient for practice, if not for ſhow.

What

* The Carthaginians are ſaid to have hang'd up their generals, tho' victorious, if the advice they acted by was wrong, Tit. Liv. lib. 38. c. 48. † Or rather Seiramnes Σειράμνης, as we read it in Plutarch, in his prologue to the remarkable ſayings of the ancient kings, princes, and generals. ‖ Plutarch in the preface, above mention'd, to the remarkable ſayings. ¶ Virgil. Æneid. lib. iii. v. 395.

What if the plaineſt reaſons are the beſt plann'd? what if the loweſt, the baſeſt, and moſt beaten, are more adapted to affairs? In order to preſerve the authority of the councils of kings, 'tis not neceſſary that profane perſons ſhould participate in them, or ſee farther into them than the firſt out-line. My conſultation ſkims over the ſubject a little, and ſlightly conſiders it by the firſt appearances. The ſtreſs and main of the buſineſs I have been us'd to reſign to heaven.

Permitte Divis cætera *.

Leave the reſt to the gods.

Good fortune and ill fortune are, in my opinion, two ſovereign powers. 'Tis a folly to think that human prudence can play the part of fortune; and vain is his attempt who preſumes to comprehend cauſes and conſequences, and to lead the progreſs of his deſign, as it were, by the hand: vain, eſpecially in military deliberations. There never was greater circumſpection and military prudence than has been ſometimes ſeen amongſt us. Could it be that men were afraid of periſhing by the way, that they reſerv'd themſelves for the cataſtrophe of the game? I do, moreover, affirm, that our very wiſdom and conſultation do, for moſt part, follow the conduct of chance. My will and my reaſon are ſometimes mov'd by one impulſe, and ſometimes by another; and many of thoſe movements govern themſelves without me. My reaſon has uncertain, and caſual agitations.

Vertuntur ſpecies animorum, et pectora motus
Nunc alios, alios, dum nubila ventus agebat,
Concipiunt †.

Now one impreſſion in their boſoms dwells,
Another when the wind the clouds diſpels.

If we do but obſerve who are the men of the greateſt ſway in cities, and who do their own buſineſs beſt, we ſhall commonly find that they are men the leaſt qualify'd. Women, children, and fools, have had the fortune to govern large dominions equally well with princes of the greateſt abilities; and we find, ſays Thucydides, that the ſtupid governors out-number thoſe of better underſtandings.

* Horat. lib. i. ode. v. 9. † Virg. geor. lib. i. v. 420, &c.

ſtandings. We aſcribe the effects of their good fortune to their prudence.

———*Ut quiſque Fortunâ utitur,*
Ita præcellet; atque exinde ſapere illum omnes dicimus *
According to their wealth all men we prize;
The rich are ſure to be cry'd up for wiſe.

Wherefore I make no manner of ſcruple to declare, that events are ſlender proofs of our worth and capacity.

Now I was upon this point, that there needs no more than to ſee a man rais'd to honour, tho' we knew him but three days before to be a man of little conſequence, yet an idea of his greatneſs and ſufficiency inſenſibly ſteals upon our opinions; and we perſuade ourſelves that as he increaſes in equipage and credit, ſo he increaſes in merit. We judge of him not according to his worth, but, as we do of counters, according to the prerogative of his rank. Let luck but turn, ſo that he fall again, and be mix'd with the common crowd, every one enquires with aſtoniſhment into the cauſe of his having been rais'd ſo high. "Is it he?" ſay they. "Did he know no better when he was in place? "are princes ſo eaſily ſatisfy'd? really we were in fine "hands." This very thing is what I have often ſeen in my time. Nay, the maſk of greatneſs, which is repreſented in comedies, does, in ſome meaſure, affect and deceive us. What I myſelf adore in kings is the crowd of their adorers. All reverence and ſubmiſſion is due to them, except that of the underſtanding. My reaſon is not oblig'd to bow and bend, but my knees are. Melanthius, being aſk'd what he thought of the tragedy of Dionyſius, ſaid, "I have not ſeen it "'tis ſo offuſcated with language †." And moſt of thoſe, who judge of the diſcourſes of great men, ſhould ſay I did not underſtand its drift, it was ſo offuſcated with gravity, grandeur, and majeſty. Antiſthenes one day perſuaded the Athenians to give order ‖ that their aſſes might be as well employ'd in the tillage of their lands

* Plautus in Pſeud, act 2. Sc. 3. v. 13. † Plutarch in his treatiſe of hearing, c. 7. of Amyot's tranſlation. ‖ Diog. Laert. in the life of Antiſtheres, lib vi. § 8. where this is told in a manner ſomewhat different, but in the main it amounts to the ſame thing.

lands as their horſes. The anſwer made to him was, that "The aſs was an animal not born for ſuch ſervice. "'Tis all one, reply'd he, you need only command it "to be done; for the moſt ignorant and incapable men "that you employ in your military orders, immediately "become worthy of 'em by your employing them." This is much like the cuſtom of many nations who, when they have choſen a king, canonize him; and do not think it enough to honour him, if they do not alſo adore him. The people of Mexico, after the ceremonies of his coronation are over, dare no more to look him in the face: but, as if they had made him a god, as well as a king, among the oaths they make him take, to maintain their religion, laws and liberties, to be valiant, juſt, and courteous; he ſwears alſo to make the ſun travel with its uſual light, to make the clouds diſtil at the proper ſeaſon, the rivers to run in their channels, and to make the earth bear all things neceſſary for his people.

I diſſent from this common practice, and have the more diſtruſt of a man's capacity when I ſee it accompany'd with a great fortune, and the public applauſe. We ought to conſider of how great advantage it is for a man to ſpeak when he pleaſes, to chuſe his ſubject, to break off the argument, or change it with a magiſterial authority, to defend himſelf againſt thoſe who argue with him by a nod of the head, a ſmile or by ſilence, in the preſence of an aſſembly trembling with reverence and reſpect. A man of a monſtrous fortune, offering to give his judgment in a ſlight diſpute that was fooliſhly ſet on foot at his table, began in theſe very words, "He "who ſays otherwiſe than ſo or ſo muſt be a liar, or an "ignoramus." Purſue this philoſophical point ſword-in-hand.

There is another obſervation I have made, that has been of great ſervice to me, which is that in diſputes and conferences, all the phraſes which we think to be good, are not immediately to be accepted. Moſt men are rich in borrow'd ſtock. One man may happen to ſay a good thing, to give an excellent anſwer, and advance a notable ſentence, without knowing the force of it. That a man is not maſter of all that he borrows may be,

perhaps, verify'd in myſelf. 'Tis not always neceſſary to yield preſently to what is advanc'd, whatever truth or beauty it has. Either a man muſt heartily oppoſe it, or draw back, on pretence of not underſtanding it, to try in all parts how it is lodg'd in its author. It may happen that we may embarraſs ourſelves, and help to puſh the argument too far. I have ſometimes, in the neceſſity and heat of combat, made puſhes that have gone through and through, beyond my deſign and expectation. I only gave them in number, but they were receiv'd by weight: in like manner, as when I contend with a briſk diſputant, I pleaſe myſelf with anticipating his concluſions; I eaſe him of the trouble of explaining himſelf, I endeavour to prevent his imagination whilſt it is yet ſpringing up and imperfect; the order and pertinency of his underſtanding warns and threatens me at a good diſtance. With theſe I take a courſe quite contrary. I muſt underſtand and pre-ſuppoſe nothing but by them. If they give judgment in general terms, "This is good, this is bad," and that they happen to be in the right, ſee if it be not fortune that hits it off for them. Let them circumſcribe and limit their judgment a little, why, or how it is ſo. Theſe univerſal judgments, which I ſee ſo common, ſignify nothing. Theſe are men who ſalute a whole people in a crowd together. Such as have a perfect knowledge of them take notice of, and ſalute them particularly, and by name; but 'tis a hazardous attempt. From hence I have more than every day ſeen it fall out that ſhallow wits, affecting to appear ingenious in taking notice of the beautiful paſſages in a work which they are reading, fix their admiration with ſo ill a choice, that, inſtead of diſcovering the author's excellence to us, they only expoſe their own ignorance. 'Tis a ſafe exclamation to ſay, "This is fine," after having heard a whole page of Virgil. By this means the cunning ones ſave their credit. But to undertake to follow him by a paſſage here and there, and, with a poſitive and approv'd judgment, to attempt the obſerving where a good author ſurpaſſes himſelf, weighing the terms, phraſes, inventions, and various excellencies, one after another, by all means forbear it. "Videndum eſt

"non

" non modo, quid quiſque loquatur, ſed etiam, quid " quiſque ſentiat, atque etiam, quâ de cauſâ quiſque " ſentiat *," i. e. we are not only to obſerve what every one ſays, but alſo what he thinks, and for what reaſon he thinks ſo. I every day hear fools ſay things that are not ſilly. If they ſay a good thing let us examine where they had it. We help them to make uſe of this fine expreſſion, and of that fine argument, which is not their own, and which they only have in keeping: they bolt them out at a venture, and by gueſs; we make them turn out to their credit and eſteem. You lend them a hand, but to what purpoſe? they don't think themſelves oblig'd to you for it, and become ſtill the greater blockheads. Never ſecond them; let them go on in their own way; they will handle the ſubject like people afraid of burning their own fingers. They neither dare to change its ſituation nor light, nor to dive into it. Shake it ever ſo little, it ſlips thro' their fingers; and, be their cauſe ever ſo good and ſtrong, they give it up to you. Theſe are fine weapons, but have not good hafts. How many times have I ſeen the proof of them. Now, if you go to explain things to them, and to confirm them, they catch at it, and immediately ſteal the advantage of your interpretation, by ſaying, " That was what I was going to ſay; that was " juſt my thought, and if I did not expreſs it ſo clearly " it was for want of language." This is mere gaſconade. There had need be malice itſelf employ'd to correct this haughty ſtupidity. Hegeſias's doctrine, that we are neither to hate nor accuſe, but to inſtruct, is right elſewhere; but here 'tis injuſtice, and inhumanity, to relieve and ſet him right; who cares not for it, and is the worſe for it. I love to let them ſink deeper, and intangle themſelves more and more in the mire, till at laſt, if it be poſſible, they may own their miſtake. Folly and nonſenſe are not to be cur'd by admonition, of which we may properly ſay, as Cyrus did to the perſon who importun'd him to make an harangue to his army juſt before a battle, viz. that men are not immediately render'd valiant and warlike, by a fine oration, no more than a man ſuddenly becomes a muſician by hear-

* Cic. de Offic. lib. i c. 41.

ing a fine ſong. Theſe are apprenticeſhips that are to be ſerv'd before-hand by a long and conſtant diſcipline. We owe this care, and this aſſiduity of correction and inſtruction, to our own people; but to go and preach to the firſt perſon that paſſes by, and, to lord it over the ignorance and folly of the firſt we meet, is a cuſtom that I heartily abhor. I rarely do it, even in private diſcourſe, and ſooner give up my cauſe than proceed to ſuch retrograde, and magiſterial inſtructions. My temper is unfit, either to ſpeak or write for petty princes. But in things which are ſaid in common, or amongſt others, however falſe and abſurd I think them, I never oppoſe them, either by word or ſign.

As to the reſt, nothing puts me ſo much out of conceit with a fool, as that he pleaſes himſelf more than any man of ſenſe can reaſonably pleaſe himſelf. 'Tis a misfortune that prudence forbids us ſelf-contentment and confidence, and ſends us always away diſcontented and diffident in caſes, where obſtinacy and raſhneſs fill thoſe that are guilty of them with joy and aſſurance. The ignorant are they, who look back at other men over the ſhoulder, always returning from the combat full of joy and triumph. And, moreover, this haughtineſs of ſtile, and gaiety of countenance, often gives them the advantage, in the opinion of by-ſtanders, who are commonly weak and incapable of rightly judging and diſcerning the real advantages. Obſtinacy and vehemency in opinion is the ſureſt proof of ſtupidity. Is there any thing ſo poſitive, reſolute, ſcornful, contemplative, ſerious, and grave as an aſs?

May we not incorporate in diſcourſe and converſation the ſharp and pointed expreſſions which mirth and familiarity introduce among friends, pleaſantly and briſkly jeſting with, and bantering one another? this is an exerciſe for which my natural gaiety fits me well enough; and, tho' it be not as tedious and ſerious, as that other exerciſe which I mention'd juſt now, 'tis every whit as acute and ingenious, and, as Lycurgus thought, altogether as uſeful. For my part, I contribute more freedom than wit to it, and am more oblig'd to luck than to invention; but I am perfect in ſuffering, for I can bear a retaliation that is not only tart but indiſcreet alſo,

ſo, without being at all mov'd. And whenever I am attack'd, if I have not a briſk repartee ready, I do not trouble myſelf by purſuing the ſubject with a nauſeous impertinent conteſt, bordering upon obſtinacy. I let it drop; am glad to give up the point, and wait a better opportunity to take ſatisfaction. No merchant is always a gainer. Moſt men, when their ſtrength fails them, change their countenance and voice; and, by an unſeaſonable indignation, inſtead of revenging themſelves, accuſe at once their own folly and impatience. In theſe jovial moments we ſometimes pinch the private ſtrings of our imperfections, which, when compos'd, we cannot touch without offence; and we hint our defects to one another to our advantage.

There are other rough and indiſcreet contentions, after the French manner, which I mortally hate. I have a tender ſkin, which is ſenſible of the leaſt touch. I have, in my time, known two princes of our royal blood interr'd, who loſt their lives by ſuch a diſpute. 'Tis unhandſome, at play, to fall out and fight.

As for the reſt, when I have a mind to judge of any one, I aſk him how he likes himſelf, to what degree his ſpeech, or his work pleaſes him. I bar thoſe fine apologies. "I did it only for my paſtime; I was not an "hour about it; I have not look'd over it ſince."

Ablatum mediis opus eſt incudibus iſtis *.

This work, unfiniſh'd, from the anvil came.

Well but, ſay I, ſet thoſe pieces aſide, and give one that repreſents you intire, ſuch a one as you would be meaſur'd by. And then what do you think is the beſt part of your performance? is it this part, or that? the grace, or the ſubject, the invention, the judgment, or the learning? for I commonly find, that men are as wide of the mark, in judging of their own works, as thoſe of others; not only by reaſon of the fondneſs they have for them, but for want of ability to know and diſtinguiſh them. The work, by its own merit and fortune, may ſecond the workman, and outſtrip him beyond his invention and knowledge. For my part, I do not judge of the value of other mens works more obſcurely than of my own; and the riſe and falls of my eſſays, in my eſti-

* Ovid Triſt. lib. i. Eleg. 6. v. 29.

mation, is very wavering and inconſtant. There are many books that are uſeful upon account of their ſubjects, from which the author derives no praiſe; and there are good books, as well as good works, which are a diſgrace to the operator. I may write of the manner of our feaſts, of the faſhion of our cloaths, and may treat of them with an ill grace. I may publiſh the edicts of my time, and the letters of princes that are handed about. I may make an abridgment of a good book (tho' all abridgments of * good books are ſilly) which book may come to be loſt, and the like. Poſterity may receive ſingular benefit from ſuch compoſitions; but what honour ſhall I get, unleſs it be by mere good luck? a great part of the authors of note are in this condition. Several years ago, when I read Philip de Comines, who is, doubtleſs, a very good author, I took notice of this, as an uncommon maxim, "That a man ſhould be cautious of doing his maſter ſo much ſervice as to hinder him from meeting with a juſt requital." I ought to commend the invention, not him; for I not long ago met with it in Tacitus, who ſays, 'that benefits give 'us a pleaſure, while they are not too great to be re-'quited; but, when they far exceed that, hatred is 'return'd inſtead of thanks †.' And Seneca does not ſcruple to ſay, "Nam qui non putat eſſe turpe non red-"dere, non vult eſſe cui reddat ‖," i. e. he who thinks it a ſhame not to make a requital, wiſhes the man, to whom he owes it, was not in being. Quintus Cicero ſays, a little more faintly, "Qui ſe non putat ſatis fa-"cere, amicus eſſe nullo modo poteſt ¶," i. e. he who thinks it is not in his power to make you ſatisfaction, can by no means be your friend. The ſubject, according to what it is, may procure the writer a reputation, for learning, and a good memory; but to inſpect him, and ſee what talents are moſt his own, and moſt worthy, and the vigour and beauty of his genius, 'tis neceſſary to

* Somebody, however, has thought fit to publiſh a kind of abridgment of Montaigne's eſſays (call'd, L'Eſprit des Eſſais, &c.) but, as if the abridgment had been made only to juſtify Montaigne's obſervation, it died as it were in its Birth, and is not like to be ever reprinted. † Tacit. Annal. lib. iv. c. 18. ‖ Senec. Ep. 81. ¶ Q. Cicer. de petitione Conſulatus, c. 9.

to know what is his own, and what is not ſo; and, in that which is not his own, to conſider how much we are oblig'd to him for the choice, diſpoſition, ornament, and language, which he has furniſh'd. What if he has borrow'd the matter, and ſpoil'd the form, as often happens? we who have little acquaintance with books, are in this difficulty, that when we meet with ſome beautiful invention in any modern poet, any powerful argument in a preacher, we dare not however, commend them for it, till we have firſt inform'd ourſelves by ſome learned man whether the ſame be their own, or borrow'd. Till then I am always on my guard.

I have very lately read the hiſtory of Tacitus, from the begining to the end (which is the more remarkable in me, as it is twenty years ago ſince I ſtuck to any one book an hour together) and I did it at the perſuaſion of a gentleman whom France holds in very great eſteem, not only for his own worth, but for a conſtant appearance of capacity and virtue, which is diſcover'd in many of his brothers. I don't know any author that, in a public narrative, has interwoven ſuch remarks on manners, and particular inclinations; and I am of a quite contrary opinion to him, which is that being eſpecially, to write the lives of the emperors of his time, ſo various and extraordinary in every ſhape; and to relate ſo many notable actions, as their cruelty particularly produc'd in their ſubjects, he had more important, and more engaging matter to diſcourſe of, and to relate, than if he had been to deſcribe battles, and univerſal commotions; inſomuch, that I often find him inſipid when he runs over the deaths of thoſe brave men, as if he fear'd we ſhould think them too numerous and tedious. This kind of hiſtoriography is by much the moſt uſeful. Public commotions depend moſt upon the conduct of fortune; private ones upon our own. This work of Tacitus is rather a judgment given upon facts, than a deduction of hiſtory. There are more leſſons than ſtories in it: 'Tis not a book to read, but to ſtudy and learn; it is full of opinions, ſome right, others wrong: 'Tis a nurſery of ethics and politics, for the uſe and ornament of ſuch as have any ſhare in the government of the world. He always uſes ſolid and vigorous arguments

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in a ſharp, ſubtle manner, according to the affected ſtile of that age; and was ſo fond of the ſublime that, where ſharpneſs and ſubtlety were wanting in the matter, he ſupply'd the defect with lofty ſwelling words. His way of writing is much like that of Seneca. His ſtile ſeems to me to be the more nervous, Seneca's more ſharp. But Tacitus's hiſtory is the moſt proper for a troubled, ſickly ſtate, as ours is at preſent; and you would often ſay, that he both pains and pinches us.

They who doubt of his integrity, plainly enough confeſs they don't like him in other reſpects. His opinions are ſolid, and lean for the moſt part, towards the Roman affairs. Nevertheleſs I am a little out of temper with him for judging more ſeverely of Pompey, than ſuited with the opinion of thoſe worthy men that liv'd in the ſame time, and treated with him; and for thinking Pompey, in all reſpects, like Marius and Sylla, excepting that he was more cloſe*. His intention, in the management of affairs, has not been exempted from ambition nor revenge; and his very friends were afraid that his victory would have tranſported him beyond the bounds of reaſon; but not to a degree ſo much beyond all reſtraint. There is nothing in Pompey's life that carries the marks of ſuch expreſs cruelty and tyranny. Neither ought we to compare ſuſpicion to evidence; conſequently I do not believe Tacitus in this matter. Suppoſing his narratives to be genuine and right, it might, perhaps, be argued, even from hence, that they are not always exactly apply'd to the concluſions of his judgments, which he always follows, according to the bias which he has taken, often beyond the ſubject he opens to us, to which he has not deign'd to give the leaſt regard. He needs not excuſe for having approv'd of the religion of his time, as it was injoin'd by the laws, and for having been ignorant of the true religion. This was his misfortune, not his fault.

I have principally conſider'd his judgment, and do not fully underſtand it every where; as theſe words, particularly in a letter which Tiberius, when old and ſick, ſent to the ſenate, ' † What ſhall I write to you, ſirs,

* Tacit. hiſt. lib. ii c. 38. † Tacit. annal, lib. vi, c. 6.

' firs, or how ſhall I write to you, or what ſhall I not ' write to you at this juncture? may the gods and god-' deſſes lay a worſe puniſhment upon me, than what ' I feel every day, if I know.' I do not ſee why he ſhould ſo poſitively apply them to a ſtinging remorſe of Tiberius's conſcience. At leaſt, when I was in the ſame caſe, I perceiv'd no ſuch thing.

This alſo ſeem'd to me a little mean in Tacitus, that, being to ſay he had exercis'd a certain * honourable office of the magiſtracy, he excus'd himſelf by ſaying that he did not mention it by way of oſtentation. This ſeems a little too low an expreſſion for ſuch a genius as his was; ſince for a man not to do himſelf juſtice, implies ſome want of courage; one of a rough and lofty judgment, which is alſo ſafe and ſound, makes uſe of his own example upon all occaſions, as well as thoſe of others; and gives evidence as freely of himſelf as of a third perſon. We are to ſuperſede theſe common rules of civility in favour of truth and liberty. I preſume not only to ſpeak of myſelf, but of myſelf alone. When I write of any thing elſe, I miſtake my way, and loſe my ſubject: yet I am not ſo indiſcreetly enamour'd with, or ſo bigotted to, and inwrapp'd up in myſelf, that I cannot diſtinguiſh, and conſider myſelf apart, as I do a neighbour, or a tree. 'Tis equally a failing for a man not to diſcern all his ability, or to ſay more than he ſees in himſelf. We owe more love to god than to ourſelves, and know him leſs; yet we ſpeak of him as much as we pleaſe.

If the writings of Tacitus make any diſcovery of his qualities, he was a great man, upright and bold; not of a ſuperſtitious, but of a philoſophical, and generous virtue.

A man may think him bold in his ſtories: as where he ſays that a ſoldier carrying a bundle of wood, his hands were ſo frozen, and ſtuck ſo faſt to it, that they were ſever'd by it from his arms. I always, in ſuch things, ſubmit to ſuch great authorities †. What he ſays alſo of

* "Domitianus edidit ludos ſeculares iiſque intentius affui, ſacerdotio Quindecimvirali præditus, actum Prætor, quod non "jactantia refero," &c. Tacit. Annal. lib. xi. c. 11. † Tacit. annal. xiii. c. 35.

of Veſpaſian *, that, by the favour of the god Serapis, he cur'd a blind woman in Alexandria, by anointing her eyes with his ſpittle, and I know not what other miracles; he does it by the example and duty of all good hiſtorians, who keep regiſters of ſuch events as are of importance. Among public accidents are alſo common rumours and opinions. 'Tis their part to relate the things commonly believ'd, not to regulate them. This is the province of the divines and the philoſophers, who are the guides of mens conſciences. Therefore it was that this companion of his, and as great a man as himſelf, very wiſely ſaid, "Equidem plura tranſcribo quàm "credo: Nam nec affirmare ſuſtineo, de quibus dubito, "nec ſubducere quæ accepi†," i. e. Indeed I ſet down more things than I believe; for as I cannot endure to affirm things whereof I doubt, ſo I cannot ſmother what I have heard. And this other; "Hæc neque "affirmare neque refellere operæ pretium eſt—famæ "rerum ſtandum eſt ‖," i. e. 'Tis not worth while to affirm, or to confute theſe matters; we muſt ſtand to report: and as he wrote in a century when the belief of prodigies began to decline, he ſays, he would not, nevertheleſs, omit to inſert in his annals, and to give a place to things receiv'd by ſo many worthy men, and with ſo great a reverence of antiquity. This was well ſaid. Let them deliver us hiſtory more as they receive, than believe it. I, who am monarch of the ſubject I treat of, and who am accountable to nobody, do not, however, believe every thing I write. I often hazard the ſallies of my fancy, of which I am very diffident, as well as certain quibbles, at which I ſhake my ears; but I let them take their chance. I ſee that by ſuch things ſome get reputation: 'tis not for me alone to judge. I preſent myſelf ſtanding, and lying on my face, my back, my right ſide and my left, and in all my natural poſtures. Wits, tho' equal in force, are not always equal in taſte and application. This is what my memory has furniſh'd me with in groſs, and with uncertainty enough. All judgments in the groſs are weak and imperfect.

CHAP.

* Hiſt lib. iv. c. 81. † Q. Curtius, lib. ix. c. 1. tranſlated by Vaugelas. ‖ Tit. Liv. lib. i. in the preface, and lib. viii. c. 6.

CHAP. IV. *Of Vanity.*

THERE is not perhaps any vanity more expreſs, than to write of it ſo vainly. That which the divinity has ſo divinely delivered of it to us, ought to be carefully and continually meditated by men of underſtanding. Who does not ſee that I have taken a road, in which I ſhall inceſſantly and eaſily jog on, ſo long as I can come at ink and paper? I can give no account of my life by my actions; fortune has placed them too low; I muſt do it by my fancies. And yet I have ſeen a gentleman who only communicated his life by the workings of his belly: you might ſee in his houſe a regular range of cloſeſtool-pans of ſeven or eight days ſtanding: that was all his ſtudy, all his diſcourſe; all other talk ſtunk in his noſtrils. Theſe here, but a little more decent, are the excrements of an old mind, ſometimes hard, ſometimes looſe, and always indigeſted; and when ſhall I have done repreſenting the continual agitation and mutation of my thoughts, on whatever ſubject comes into my head, ſeeing that Diomedes* wrote ſix thouſand books upon the ſole ſubject of grammar? what then muſt be the product of loquacity, if the world was ſtuffed with ſuch a horrible load of volumes to facilitate pronunciation and free utterance? ſo many words about words only. O Pythagoras, why didſt not thou lay this tempeſt! they accuſed one Galba of old for living idly; he made anſwer, "That every one ought to give "account of his actions, but not of his leiſure*." He was

* Here Montaigne ſeems to have relied ſimply upon his memory, and to have miſtaken Diomedes for Dydimus the Grammarian, who, as Seneca ſays, wrote four thouſand books on queſtions of vain literature, which was the principal ſtudy of the antient Grammarians. In ſome of theſe books was an enquiry into Homers native county; in others who was the true mother of Æneas; in ſome, whether Anacreon was the greater whore maſter, or drunkard; in others, whether Sappho was a common ſtrumpet, and the like things; which were better unlearnt, if you krew them. Seneca, Ep. 88.

* This was a ſaying of the emperor Galba in his life by Suetonius, § 9. It muſt be allowed here, either that Montaigne

was miſtaken, for juſtice takes cognizance of, and paſſes cenſure even upon thoſe that pick ſtraws

But there ſhould be ſome reſtraint of law againſt fooliſh and impertinent ſcriblers, as well as againſt vagabonds and idle perſons; which, if there was, both I and an hundred others would be baniſhed the kingdom. I do not ſpeak this in jeſt: ſcribling ſeems to be a ſymptom of a licentious age. When did we write ſo much as ſince our civil wars? when the Romans ſo much, as when their commonwealth was running to ruin? beſides that the refining of wits does not make people wiſer in ſtate policy. This idle employment ſprings from hence, that every one applies himſelf negligently to the duty of his vocation, and is debauched from it. The corruption of the age is a fund to which each of us contribute. Some treachery, others injuſtice, irreligion, tyranny, avarice, and cruelty, according as they are in power; and the weaker ſort, of which I am one, contribute ſolly, vanity, and idleneſs. It ſeems as if it were the ſeaſon for vain things when the hurtful oppreſs us. In a time when doing ill is ſo common, to do nothing but what ſignifies nothing is a kind of commendation. It is my comfort, that I ſhall be one of the laſt that ſhall be called to account; and whilſt the greater offenders are taken to taſk, I ſhall have leiſure to amend: For, it would, methinks, be againſt reaſon to proſecute little inconveniences, whilſt we are infected with the greater. As the phyſician, Philotimus, ſaid to one who preſented him his finger to dreſs, and who, he perceived, both by his complexion and his breath, had an ulcer in his lungs: "Friend," ſaid he, "this is not a time for you to be "paring your nails *."

And yet I ſaw, ſome years ago, a perſon whoſe memory I have in very great eſteem, who in the very height of

taigne did not quote this from the original, or that his memory failed him; for, if he had meant the emperor Galba, he would have called him, as he here does, "one Galba of old." This is ſo palpable, that in the edition of his eſſays, printed at Paris in 1602, by Abel l'Angulier, in that part of the index referring to this paſſage, care is taken to point out expreſsly, that the Galba here mentioned is to be diſtinguiſhed from the emperor of this name. † Plutarch in his treatiſe, "How to diſtinguiſh the flatterer from the friend, ch. 31.

of our great diſorders, when there was neither law nor juſtice, nor magiſtrate that performed his office, any more than there is now, publiſhed I know not what pitiful reformations about cloaths, cookery, and chicanery in law. Theſe are amuſements wherewith to feed a people that are ill uſed, to ſhew that they are not totally forgot. Thoſe others do the ſame, who inſiſt upon a ſtrict prohibition of the forms of ſpeaking, dances and games, to a people totally abandoned to all ſorts of execrable vices. 'Tis no time to bathe and clean a man's ſelf when he is ſeized on by a violent fever. 'Tis for the Spartiates only to fall to combing and curling themſelves, when they are juſt upon the point of running head-long into ſome extreme danger of their life.

For my part, I have yet a worſe cuſtom, that if my ſhoe go awry, I let my ſhirt and my cloak do ſo too; I ſcorn to mend myſelf by halves: when I am in a bad plight, I feed upon miſchief; I abandon myſelf through deſpair; let myſelf go towards the precipice, and as the ſaying is "Throw the helve after the hatchet. I am obſtinate in growing worſe, and think myſelf no more worth my own care; I am either good or ill throughout. 'Tis a favour to me, that the deſolation of this kingdom falls out in the deſolation of my age: I better ſuffer that my ills be multiplied, than if my Goods had been diſturbed. The words I utter in misfortune are words of ſpite. My courage ſets up it's briſtles inſtead of letting them down; and, contrary to others, I am more devout in good than evil fortune, according to the precept of Xenophon, if not according to his reaſon, and am more ready to turn up my eyes to heaven to return my thanks, than to crave; I am more ſollicitous to improve my health when I am well, than to recover it when I have loſt it. Proſperities are the ſame diſcipline and inſtruction to me, that adverſities and perſecutions are to others: as if good fortune were inconſiſtent with a good conſcience, men never grow good, but in ill fortune. Good fortune is to me a ſingular ſpur to modeſty and moderation. Intreaty wins me, a menace checks me, favour makes me bend, fear ſtiffens me.

Amongſt human conditions this is very common, viz. to be better pleaſed with ſtrange things than our own, and to love motion and change.

Ipſa dies idcò nos grato perluit hauſtu,
Quod permutatis hora recurrit equis *.

The ſun itſelf makes the more pleaſant tour,
Becauſe it changes horſes ev'ry hour.

I have my ſhare. Thoſe who follow the other extreme of being pleaſed with themſelves; who value what they have above all the reſt, and conclude no beauty can be greater than what they ſee, if they are not wiſer than we, are really more happy. I do not envy their wiſdom, but their good fortune. This greedy appetite for new and unknown things makes me the more deſirous of travel: but many more circumſtances contribute to it. I am very willing to withdraw from the government of my family. There is, I confeſs, a kind of convenience in commanding, through it were but in a barn, and to be obeyed by one's ſervants. But it is too uniform and languiſhing a pleaſure, and is moreover of neceſſity mixt with manyvexatious thoughts; as one while, the poverty and the oppreſſion of your dependants; another, quarrels amongſt neighbours; another, while the incroachment they make upon you afflicts you;

Aut verberatæ grandine vineæ,
Funduſque mendax, arbore nunc aquas
Culpante, nunc torrentia agros
Sydera, nunc hyemes iniquas †.

Whether his vines be ſmit with hail,
Whether his promis'd harveſt fail,
Perfidious to his toil;
Whether his drooping trees complain
Of angry winter's chilling rain,
Or ſtars that parch the ſoil.

and that God ſcarce in ſix months ſends a ſeaſon to the ſatisfaction of your Bailiff; but that if it ſerves the vines, it hurts the meadows.

Aut nimiis torret fervoribus ætherius ſol,
Aut ſubiti perimun imbres, gelidæque pruinæ,
Flabráque ventorum violento turbine vexant ‖.

Whether

* Petronius Arbiter. Epig. † Horat. lib. iii. ode 1. v. 25, &c. ‖ Lucret. lib. v. v. 216. &c.

Whether the ſun, with its too ſcorching pow'rs,
Burns up the fruit, or clouds them drown with ſhow'rs;
Or chill'd by too much ſnow, they ſoon decay;
Or ſudden whirlwinds blow them all away.

To which may be added, the new and neat-made ſhoe of the man of old *, that hurts your foot; and that a ſtranger does not underſtand how much it coſts you, and what you contribute to maintain that ſhow of order which is ſeen in your family, and which peradventure you buy too dear.

I came late to the government of a family. They whom nature ſent into the world before me, eaſed me of that trouble for a long while: ſo that I had already taken another turn more ſuitable to my humour; yet for ſo much as I have ſeen, it is an employment more troubleſome than difficult. Whoever is capable of any thing elſe will eaſily be capable of that. Had I a mind to be rich, that way would ſeem too long; I had ſerved my kings, a more profitable traffic than any other. Since I pretend to nothing but the reputation of having got nothing, as I have ſquandered nothing, conformable to the reſt of my life, improper either to do good or ill of any moment; and that I only deſire to rub on, I can do it, thanks be to God, without any great attention. At the worſt, always prevent poverty by leſſening your expence: 'tis that which I make my great concern, and to live within bounds before neceſſity compels me. As to the reſt, I have ſufficiently ſettled my thoughts to live upon leſs than I have, and to live contentedly. "Non æſtimatione cenſus, verum victu, atque cultu, "terminatur pecuniæ modus †. It is not by the value of our poſſeſſions, but by our diet and clothing that our expences ſhould be regulated. My real need does not ſo wholly take up all I have, but misfor-

 tune

* Plutarch's life of Paulus Æmilius, ch. 3. † Cicer. Paradox. vi. c. 2. Mere common ſenſe demonſtrates this to the loweſt claſs of people, who when they ſee a purſe proud creature ridicule him by ſaying, "If he is ſo rich, let him dine "twice a day." This, though a common ſarcaſm (in France) contains a wiſe hint, very little known to moſt great men, who for want of it are engaged in employing one half of their lives to render the other wretched.

tune may faſten her teeth without biting me to the quick. My preſence, as contemptible as it is, and as little as I know of matters, is of ſervice in my domeſtic affairs; I employ myſelf in them, but it goes againſt the grain, conſidering alſo, that while I burn my candle at one end by myſelf, the other end is not ſpared.

Journeys do me no harm but only by their expence, which is great, and more than I am well able to bear; being always wont to travel with not only a neceſſary, but a handſome equipage. I muſt make them ſo much the ſhorter and the fewer, and therein I ſpend but the ſurplus, and what I have reſerved for ſuch purpoſe, delaying and timing my motion till that be ready. I deſire not that the pleaſure of going abroad ſhould ſpoil the pleaſure of my being retired at home. On the contrary, I intend they ſhall nouriſh and favour one another. Fortune has aſſiſted me in this, that ſince my principal profeſſion in this life, was to live at eaſe, and rather to have nothing to do than too much, ſhe has ſpared me the neceſſity of growing rich, to provide for a multitude of heirs. If there be not enough for one, of that whereof I had ſo much plenty, at his peril be it, his imprudence will not deſerve that I ſhould wiſh him any more. And every one, according to the example of Phocion, provides ſufficiently for his children, who provides for them ſo as they bear a reſemblance to himſelf. I ſhould by no means like Crates his way. He left his money in the hand of a banker, with this condition; that if his children were fools, he ſhould then give it to them; if witty, he ſhould then diſtribute it to the moſt fools of the people. As if fools, for being leſs capable of living without riches, were more capable of uſing them. So it is that the damage which is occaſioned by my abſence, ſeems not to deſerve, ſo long as I am able to ſupport it, that I ſhould wave the occaſions of diverting myſelf from that troubleſome attendance.

There is always ſomething that goes croſs. The affairs one while of one houſe, and then of another, almoſt diſtract you. You pry into every thing too near; your perſpicacity does you hurt here as well as in other things. I ſteal away from occaſions of vexing myſelf,

and

and turn from the knowledge of things that go amiſs, and yet cannot I ſo order it, but that every hour I ſtumble at ſomething or other that diſpleaſes me. And the tricks which they moſt conceal from me, are thoſe that I beſt know. Some there are that a man himſelf muſt help to conceal, that they may do the leſs miſchief. Vain vexations, vain ſometimes but always vexatious. The ſmalleſt and ſlighteſt impediments are the moſt piercing: and as little letters moſt tire the eyes, ſo do little affairs the moſt diſturb us. A rout of little ills more offend than the violence of any ſingle one how great ſoever. Domeſtic thorns, the more numerous and delicate they are, they prick the deeper; and without warning, eaſily ſurprize us, when we leaſt ſuſpect them. I am no Philoſopher. Evils oppreſs me according to their importance, and they import as much according to the form as the matter; and very often more. I ſee farther into them than the vulgar, yet I have more patience. Finally, they vex me, if they do not hurt me. Life is a tender thing, and eaſily diſturbed. Since my face looks a little more moroſe, " (Nemo enim re-" ſiſtit ſibi cum cœperit impelli *? For no man recovers himſelf, after he once begins to ſtoop;) for the moſt trivial cauſe imaginable, I irritate that humour, which afterwards nouriſhes and exaſperates itſelf of its own accord; attracting and heaping up matter upon matter whereon to feed.

Stillicidi caſus lapidem cavat †.

A falling drop at laſt will cave a ſtone.

Gutta cavat ſaxum non vi, ſed ſæpe cadendo.

Theſe continual trickling drops corrode and prey upon me. Ordinary inconveniences are never light, they are continual and irreparable; and when they ſpring from family-concerns are continual and inſeparable. When I conſider my affairs at diſtance, and in groſs, I find, becauſe perhaps my memory is none of the beſt, that they have improved hitherto beyond my reaſon and reckoning. Methinks my revenue is greater than it is; the proſperity betrays me: but when I pry more narrowly into the buſineſs, and ſee how all things go ſeparately,

Tum

* Seneca, epiſt. 13. † Lucret. lib. i. v 314.

Tum vero in curas animum diducimus omnes *.

——————— then my breaſt
Is with innumerable cares oppreſs'd.

I have a thouſand things to deſire and to fear. To give them quite over is very eaſy for me to do: but to look after them without trouble is very hard. It is a miſerable thing to be in place where every thing you ſee employs and concerns you. And I fancy that I more chearfully enjoy the pleaſures of another man's houſe, and with freer and purer reliſh. Diogenes †, according to my humour, anſwered him who aſked what ſort of wine he liked beſt "That which is not my own," ſaid he.

My father took a delight in building at Montaigne, where he was born, and in all the management of domeſtic affairs, I love to follow his example and rules; and ſhall engage thoſe who are to ſucceed me, as much as in me lies, to do the ſame. Could I do better for him, I would; and am proud that his will is ſtill performing and acting by me. God forbid, that I ſhould ever fail in any reſemblance of life to ſo good a father. And whereas I have taken in hand to finiſh a certain old wall, and to repair a ruinous piece of building, I have really done it more out of reſpect to his deſign, than my own ſatisfaction; and am angry at myſelf, for being ſo lazy, that I have not proceeded further to finiſh what he began in his houſe; and the more, becauſe I am very likely to be the laſt poſſeſſor of my race, and to give the laſt hand to it. For, as to my own particular application, neither this pleaſure of building, which they ſay is ſo bewitching, nor hunting, nor gardens, nor the other pleaſures of a retired life, are capable of giving me much amuſement. And it is what I am angry at myſelf for, as I am for all other opinions that are incommodious to me; which I would not ſo much care to have vigorous and learned, as I would have them eaſy and convenient for life. They are true and ſound enough, if they are profitable and pleaſing. Such as, hearing me declare my ignorance in huſbandry, whiſper

* Virg. Æn. lib. v. v. 720. † Diogenes Laert. in the life of Diogenes the Cynic, lib. vi. § 54.

whiſper in my ear, that it is out of diſdain, that I neglect to know the inſtruments of huſbandry, its ſeaſon and order; how they cultivate my vines, how they graft, and to know the names and forms of herbs and fruit, and the dreſſing the meat by which I live, with the names and prices of the ſtuffs I wear, becauſe I have ſet my heart upon ſome ſublimer knowledge, kill me in ſaying ſo. This is folly, and rather ſtupidity than glory; I had rather be a good horſe man than a good logician.

Quin tu aliquid ſaltem potius quorum indiget uſus,
Viminibus mollique paras detexere junco *.

Mind rather what the wants of life demand;
To weaving willow twigs apply thy hand.

We embarraſs our thoughts about the general concern, and about univerſal cauſes and conducts, which are very well carried on without us, and leave our own buſineſs behind, with the care of our own perſons, which are nearer to us, than that of any one man whatever. Now I am indeed for the moſt part at home, and wiſh to be better pleaſed there than elſewhere.

Sit meæ ſedes utinam ſenectæ,
Sit modus laſſo maris, & viarum,
Militiæque †.

May that which was the Grecians ſeat
Afford my age a calm retreat:
Be it my port of reſt and eaſe,
From warfare, journeys, and rough ſeas.

I know not whether or no I ſhall bring it about; I could wiſh, that inſtead of ſome other parcel of his eſtate, my father had conſigned to me the paſſionate affection he had in his old age to his oeconomy. He was happy in that he could accommodate his deſires to his fortune, and ſatisfy himſelf with what he had. State-philoſophy may to much purpoſe condemn the meanneſs and ſterility of my employment, if I can once come to reliſh it as he did. I am of opinion, that the moſt honourable calling is to ſerve the public, and to be uſeful to many. "Fructus enim ingenii, & virtutis, omniſque præſtantiæ tum maximus accipitur, quum in proximum quemque confertur ‖" We reap moſt advantage from

* Virg. eclog. 2. v. 71. † Horat. lib. ii. ode 6. v. 6.
‖ Cicero de Amicitia, c. 19.

from wit, virtue, and all ſorts of merit, when every one of our neareſt relations has a ſhare of it. For my part, I quit all claim to it; partly out of lazineſs, and partly out of conſcience; for where I ſee the weight that lies upon ſuch employments, I perceive alſo the little means I have to contribute to them; and Plato, who was a maſter in all political government, did nevertheleſs abſtain from them. I content myſelf with enjoying the world without being perplex'd with it, and only to live an irreproachable life, and ſuch a one as may neither be a burthen to myſelf, nor to any other.

Never did any man more fully and freely reſign himſelf to the care and government of a third perſon, than I ſhould do, had I any one to truſt in. One of my wiſhes at this time would be, to have a ſon-in-law that knew how to humour my old age, and to lull it aſleep; into whoſe hands I might depoſite the chief and ſole management and uſe of all my goods, that he might diſpoſe of them as I do, and get by them what I get, provided that he had a heart truly grateful and friendly. But what ſhall we ſay? we live in a world where loyalty in one's own children is unknown.

He that has the charge of my purſe upon travel, has it purely, and without controul; ſo that he might eaſily deceive me in reckoning; and, if he is not a devil, I oblige him to be honeſt, by ſo entire a truſt: "Multi fallere docuerunt, dum timent falli, & aliis "jus peccandi ſuſpicando fecerunt *. Many have taught others to deceive, by fearing to be deceived, and by ſuſpecting them have given them a handle to be unjuſt. The moſt common ſecurity I take of my people, is their ignorance: I never ſuſpect any to be vicious, till I have found them ſo, and repoſe the moſt confidence in the younger ſort, who I think are leaſt corrupted by bad examples. I had rather be told at two months end, that I have expended four hundred crowns, than to have my ears dinned every night with three, five and ſeven; and yet I have ſuffered as little as any body by this kind of larceny. It is true, I am willing enough not to know it; I do in ſome ſort in good earneſt, harbour a kind of perplexed, uncertain

* Seneca, epiſt. 3.

certain knowledge of my money; for to a certain proportion, I am content with room to doubt. One muſt leave a little for the infidelity or indiſcretion of a ſervant: if we have enough in groſs to do our buſineſs, let the over-plus of fortune's liberality run a little more freely at her mercy; it is the gleaners perquiſite. After all, I do not ſo much value the fidelity of my people, as I contemn their injury. What a vile and ridiculous thing it is for a man to ſet his heart on his money, to delight himſelf with handling and telling it! that is the way by which avarice makes its approaches.

In eighteen years that I have had my eſtate in my own hands, I could never prevail with myſelf, either to inſpect my deeds, or my principal affairs, which ought of neceſſity to paſs through my knowledge and care. It is not a philoſophical diſdain of worldly and tranſitory things. My taſte is not refined to that degree; and I value them at leaſt at what they are worth; but it is in truth an inexcuſable and childiſh lazineſs and negligence. What would I not rather do than read a covenant, and ſooner than be a ſlave to my own buſineſs, and to tumble over a bundle of old muſty deeds? or, which is worſe, thoſe of another man, as ſo many do now a-days to get money? I grudge nothing but care and trouble, and aim at nothing ſo much as to be quite careleſs and indolent. I was much fitter, I believe, could it have been without obligation and ſervitude, to have lived upon another man's fortune; and yet I do not know when I examine it nearer, whether, according to my humour, what I have to ſuffer from my affairs and and ſervants, and domeſtics, has not in it ſometimes more abject, troubleſome and tormenting, than there would be in ſerving a man better born than myſelf, who would guide me with a gentle rein, and a little at my own eaſe, "Servitus obedientia eſt fracti animi, et abjecti, arbitrio carentis ſuo *. Servitude is the obedience of a broken ſpirit and an abject mind, wanting its own free will. Crates did worſe, who threw himſelf into the franchiſe of poverty, only to rid himſelf of the inconveniencies and cares of his family. This is what I would not do; I hate poverty equally with pain; but

* Cicero Paradox. 5, c. iv.

but I could be content to change the kind of life I live for another that was meaner, and had leſs buſineſs. When abſent from home, I ſtrip myſelf of all ſuch thoughts; and ſhould be leſs concerned for the ruin of a tower, than I am, when preſent, at the fall of a tile. My mind is eaſily compoſed when I am at a diſtance, but ſuffers as much as that of the meaneſt peaſant when I am in the place. The reins of my bridle being wrong placed, or a ſtrap flapping againſt my leg, will put me out of humour a day together. I raiſe my courage well enough againſt inconveniencies, lift up my eyes I cannot,

Senſus, ô ſuperi, ſenſus.

The ſenſes! O ye gods, the ſenſes!

I am at home reſponſible for whatever goes amiſs. Few maſters, I ſpeak of thoſe of middle rank, as mine is, (and if there be any ſuch, they are happy) can rely ſo much upon another, but that great part of the burthen will lie upon their own ſhoulders. This takes much from my grace in entertaining ſtrangers, ſo that I have peradventure detained ſome rather out of expectation of a good dinner, than by my behaviour; and I loſe much of the pleaſure I ought to reap at my own houſe, from the viſits and company of my friends. The moſt ridiculous carriage of a gentleman in his own houſe, is when he is buſtling about the buſineſs of the family, whiſpering one ſervant, and frowning at another. It ought inſenſibly to ſlide on like a gentle ſtream; and I think it equally unhandſome to talk much to their gueſts of their entertainment, whether by way of bragging or excuſe. I love order and cleanlineſs,

& cantharus, & lanx
Oſtendunt mihi me *.

Glaſſes well rins'd, my table always grace,
And diſhes ſhine, in which I ſee my face,

more than profuſion; and at home have an exact regard to neceſſity, little to outward ſhew. If a footman falls to cuffs at another man's houſe, or if a diſh be ſpilt, you only laugh at it. You ſleep whilſt the maſter of the houſe is ſtating a bill of fare with his ſteward, for your next day's entertainment: I ſpeak according as I do myſelf,

* Horat. lib. i. epiſt. 5. v. 23. 24.

ſelf, eſteeming nevertheleſs good huſbandry in general, and conſidering how pleaſant an amuſement a quiet and happy management, carried regularly on, is to ſome natures: and not willing to annex my own errors and inconveniencies to the thing, nor to contradict Plato, who looks upon it as the moſt pleaſant employment for every one to do his own buſineſs, without wrong to another. When I travel, I have nothing to care for but myſelf, and the laying out my money; which is diſpoſed of by one ſingle precept.

Too many things are required to the raking it together, of which I have no notion: in ſpending it I underſtand a little, and how to give my expences a reputation, which is indeed their principal uſe. But I rely too vainly upon this, which renders it unequal and unfaſhionable, and moreover immoderate, in both views. If it makes a ſhow, if it ſerve the turn, I indiſcreetly let it run, and as indiſcreetly tie up my purſe-ſtrings if it does not ſhine and pleaſe me. Whatever it be, whether art or nature that imprints in us the condition of living to pleaſe others, it does us much more harm than good. We deprive ourſelves of our own profit, to accommodate appearances to the common opinion. We care not ſo much what our being is, as to ourſelves, and in reality, as what it is in the public obſervation. Even the talents of wit, and wiſdom itſelf, ſeem fruitleſs to us, if only enjoyed by ourſelves, and if it produce not itſelf to the view and approbation of others. There is a ſort of men whoſe gold runs in cluſters imperceptibly underground; others expend it all in plates and leaves, ſo that to the one a * lyard is worth a crown, and to others the contrary: the world eſteeming its uſe and value, according to the diſplay of it. All curious ſolicitude about riches ſmells of avarice: even they very diſpoſing of it with a too punctual and artificial liberality, is not worth a painful thought. He that will order his expence to juſt ſo much, makes it too pinched and narrow. The ſaving or ſpending money are of themſelves indifferent things, and receive no colour of good or ill but according to the application of the will.

The

* A piece of copper money worth three farthings.

The other cauſe that tempts me to theſe journeys, is a non conformity to the preſent manners of our ſtate; I could eaſily put up with this corruption for the ſake of the public intereſt,

pejoraque ſæcula ferri
Temporibus, quorum ſceleri non invenit ipſa
Nomen & á nullo poſuit natura metallo *.

Worſe than the iron age, ſo bad theſe times!
Nature no metal hath to name our crimes.

but not for my own. I am in particular too much oppreſſed. For in my neighbourhood we are of late, by the long licenciouſneſs of our civil wars, grown old in ſo riotous a form of ſtate,

Quippe, ubi fas verſum atque nefas †.

Where impious mortals right and wrong confound.

that in earneſt, 'tis a wonder how it can ſubſiſt.

Armati terram exercent, ſemperque recentes
Convectare juvat prædas, & vivere rapto ‖

With arms upon their backs they plow the ſoil,
And their delight is to ſubſiſt by ſpoil.

In fine, I ſee by our example, that the ſociety of men is maintained and held together at any price ſoever: In what condition ſoever they are placed they will ſtill cloſe and ſtick together, both moving and in heaps; as uneven bodies, that, ſhuffled together without order, find of themſelves a means to unite and ſettle one among another, often better than they could have been diſpoſed by art. King Philip muſtered up a rabble of the moſt wicked and incorrigible raſcals he could pick out, and put them all together into a city he had cauſed to be built for that purpoſe ¶, which bore their name. I reckon that they notwithſtanding their vices, erected a government amongſt themſelves, and a commodious and juſt ſociety. I ſee not one action, either three, or an hundred, but manners, in common and received uſe, ſo cruel, eſpecially inhumanity and treachery, which are to me the worſt of all vices, that I have not the heart to think of them without horror; and almoſt as much admire as I deteſt them. The exerciſe of theſe notorious

* Juven. Sat. 13. v. 28 &c. † Geo. lib. i. v 504.
‖ Virg. Æn. lib. viii. v 748. ¶ Πονηρόπολις, or Rogues-Town. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. iv. c. 11.

ous villanies carries as great ſigns of vigour and fortitude of mind, as of error and diſorder. Neceſſity reconciles and brings men together; and this accidental union is afterwards cemented by itſelf into laws: for there have been as ſavage ones as any human opinion could conceive, which nevertheleſs have maintained their body with as much health and length of life, as any that Plato or Ariſtotle could invent. And certainly, all theſe deſcriptions of civil government feigned by art, are found to be ridiculous, and unfit for practice.

Theſe great and tedious debates about the beſt form of ſociety, and the moſt commodious rules to bind us, are debates only proper for the exerciſe of our wits; as in the arts there are ſeveral ſubjects which have their being in agitation and controverſy, and have no life but there. Such an Idea of government might be of ſome value in a new world; but ours is a world ready made to our hands, and formed to certain cuſtoms. We do not beget it as Pyrrha, or a Cadmus did theirs. By what means ſoever we may claim the privilege to ſet it to rights, and give it a new form, we can hardly twiſt it from its wonted bent, but we ſhall break all. Solon being aſked, whether he had eſtabliſhed the beſt laws he could for the "Athenians; "Yes, ſaid he, of thoſe they have received." Varro excuſes himſelf after the ſame manner, that if they were to begin to write of religion, he would ſay what he believed; but being it was already received, he would write more according to uſance than nature. Not according to opinion, but in truth and reality, the beſt and moſt excellent government for every nation is that under which it is maintained. Its form and eſſential convenience depend upon cuſtom. We are apt to be diſpleaſed at the preſent condition; but I do nevertheleſs maintain, that to deſire an oligarchy in a popular ſtate, or another ſort of government in monarchy than that already eſtabliſhed, is both vice and folly.

Ayme l'eſtat tel que tu le vois eſtre;
S'il eſt Royal, ayme la royautè,
S'il eſt de peu, ou bien communautè,
Ayme l'auſſi, car Dieu t'y a faict naiſtre *.

The government approve, be't what it will,
If it be royal, then love monarchy:
If a republic, yet approve it ſtill,
For God himſelf to it has born thee.

So writ the good Monſieur de Pybrac, whom we have lately loſt, a man of ſo excellent a wit, ſo ſound opinions, and ſo ſweet a behaviour. This loſs, and that at the ſame time we have had of Monſieur de Foix, are of ſo great importance to the crown, that I do not know whether there is another couple left in France, worthy to ſupply the rooms of theſe two Gaſcons, for ſincerity and wiſdom, in our king's council. They were both great geniuſes, and certainly, according to the age, rare and excellent, each of them in his way. But what deſtiny was it placed in theſe times, men ſo remote from and ſo diſproportioned to our corruptions and inteſtine tumults?

Nothing preſſes ſo hard upon a ſtate as innovation: change only gives form to juſtice and tyranny. When any piece is out of its place, it may be propt; one may obviate the alteration and corruption natural to all things, leſt they carry us too far from our beginnings and principles: but to undertake to new caſt ſo great a maſs, and to change the foundations of ſo vaſt a building, is for them to do, who, to make clean, rub all out; who are for reforming particular defects by an univerſal confuſion, and for curing diſeaſes by death: "Non tam commutandarum quam evertendarum re-"rum cupidi *." Not ſo deſirous of changing, as of overthrowing things. The world is uncapable to cure itſelf; and ſo impatient of any thing that preſſes it, that it thinks of nothing but diſengaging itſelf from it, coſt what it will. We ſee by a thouſand examples, that it ordinarily cures itſelf to its coſt: the diſcharge of a preſent evil is no cure, if there be not a general amendment of condition. The chirurgeon's end is not to deaden the bad Fleſh, that is but the beginning of

* Pybrac aux Quadrins. † Cicer. Offic. lib. ii. c. 1.

of his cure; his view is moreover to fill up the wound with natural fleſh, and to reſtore the member to its due eſtate. Whoever only propoſes to himſelf to remove that which offends him, falls ſhort, for good does not neceſſarily ſucceed evil; another evil may ſucceed and a worſe, as it happened to *Cæſar*'s aſſaſſins, who brought the Republic to ſuch a paſs, that they had reaſon to repent their having a hand in it. The ſame has ſince happened to ſeveral others, even down to our own times. The French, my contemporaries, know it well enough. All great changes ſhake and diſorder a ſtate.

Whoever would aim directly at a cure, and conſider of it before he began, would not be ſo earneſt to attempt it. Pacuvius Calavius corrected the vice of this proceeding by a notable example. His fellow citizens having mutinied againſt their magiſtrates, he being a man of great authority in the city of Capua, found means one day to ſhut up the ſenators in the palace; and calling the people together in the ſquare, he told them, that the day was now come, wherein they were at full liberty to revenge themſelves on the tyrants by whom they had been ſo long oppreſſed; and whom he had now all alone, and diſarmed at his mercy; adviſing them withal, that they ſhould call them out one by one by lot; and particularly determine of every one, cauſing whatever ſhould be decreed to be immediately executed *; with this caution alſo, that they ſhould at the ſame inſtant depute ſome honeſt man in the place of him that was condemned, to the end there might be no vacancy in the ſenate. They had no ſooner heard the name of one ſenator, but a clamour of univerſal diſlike was raiſed againſt him. I ſee, ſays Pacuvius, that this man muſt be put out; he is a wicked fellow, let us look out a good one in his room: immediately there was a profound ſilence, every one being at a ſtand whom to chooſe. But one, more impudent than the reſt, having named his man, there aroſe yet a greater conſent of voices againſt him, an hundred imperfections being laid to his charge, and as many juſt

* All this is mentioned in Titus Livius, lib. xxiii. c. 2, 3. and touched, as I think, by a maſterly Hand.

reaſons preſently given for rejecting him. Theſe contradictory humours growing hot, it fared ſtill worſe with the ſecond ſenator and the third, there being as much diſagreement in the election of the new, as there was conſent in the putting out of the old. In the end, growing weary of this buſtle to no purpoſe, they began ſome one way, and ſome another, to ſteal out of the aſſembly; every one bearing this reſolution in his mind, that the oldeſt and beſt known evil was ever more ſupportable, than one that was new and untried.

To ſee how miſerably we are torn in pieces:
For what have we not done?

Eheu cicatricum, & ſceleris pudet,
Fratrumque: quid nos dura refugimus
Ætas? Quid intactum nefaſti
Liquimus? Unde manus Juventus
Metu Deorum continuit? Quibus
Pepercit aris *?

Alas! the ſhameleſs ſcars! the guilty deeds,
When by a brother's hand a brother bleeds!
What crimes have we, a harden'd age, not dar'd?
What ſacred altars have our raſh youth ſpar'd?
Not by the fear of heaven's wrath debarr'd.

I do not preſently conclude in the ſtile of a prophet,

ipſa ſi velit ſalus,
Servare prorſus non poteſt hanc familiam †.

This family does ſo behave
That providence them cannot ſave.

We are not however peradventure at the laſt gaſp. The preſervation of ſtates is a thing that in all likelihood ſurpaſſes our underſtanding. A civil government, is, as Plato ſays, a mighty thing, and ſo hard to be diſſolved, that it holds out many times againſt mortal and inteſtine diſeaſes, againſt the injury of unjuſt laws, againſt tyranny, the extravagance and ignorance of magiſtrates, and the licentiouſneſs and ſedition of the people. We compare ourſelves in all our fortunes to what is above us, and ſtill look towards our betters: but let us meaſure ourſelves with what is below us, there is no one ſo miſerable but he may find a thouſand examples

* Hor. lib. i. Ode 35. v. 33. † Ter. Adel. Act. 4. ſcene 7. v. 43.

examples that will adminiſter conſolation to him. 'Tis our vice that we more unwillingly look upon what is above, than willingly what is below us; and Solon was uſed to ſay, that were we to make a heap of all evils together, there is no one would not rather chooſe to bear with thoſe which he ſuffers, than to come to an equal diviſion with all other men from that heap, and take his particular ſhare. Our government is indeed ſick, but there have been others ſicker, withou dying. The Gods play at tennis with us, and bandy us every way. "Enim vero Dii nos Homines quaſi pilas ha-"bent *.

The ſtars have fatally deſtined the ſtate of Rome for an example of what they could do in this kind: In it are comprized all the forms and adventures that concern a ſtate; all that order or diſorder, good or evil fortune can do. Who then can deſpair of his condition, ſeeing the ſhocks and commotions wherewith ſhe was toſt, and yet ſupported them all? If the extent of dominion be the health of a State, which I by no means think it is, (and Iſocrates pleaſes me, when he inſtructs Nicocles not to envy princes who have large dominions †, but them who know how to preſerve thoſe that fall into their hands) that of Rome was never ſo ſound, as when it was moſt ſick: the worſt of her forms was the moſt fortunate. A man can hardly diſcern any image of government under the firſt Emperors; it was the moſt horrible and groſs confuſion that can be imagined. It ſupported it notwithſtanding, and therein continued, preſerving a monarchy not limited within its own bounds, but ſo many nations, ſo differing, ſo remote, ſo ill-affected, ſo irregularly commanded, and ſo unjuſtly conquered.

——————*nec gentibus ullis,*
Commodat in populum, terræ, pelagique potentem,
Invidiam fortuna ſuam ‖.
No foreign potentates did fortune yet
Inſpire with envy againſt Rome ſo great,
That over kingdoms and their mighty kings,
Or'e land, and ſeas ſhe ſtretcht her eagle's wings.

* The words of Plautus in his prologue to the Captives, v. 22. † Iſocrates ad Nicoclem, p. 34. ‖ Lucan. lib. i. v. 82.

Every thing that totters does not tumble. The contexture of so great a body holds by more nails than one. It holds even by its antiquity, like old buildings, from which the foundations are worn away by time, without rough-cast or mortar, which yet live and support themselves by their own weight;

———*nec jam validis radicibus hærens,*
Pondere tuta suo est *.

Like an old lofty oak, that heretofore
Great conq'tors spoils, and sacred trophies bore.

Moreover, to discover only the flank and the graff, is not the right way. In order to judge of the security of a place, it must be examined which way approaches can be made to it, and in what condition the assailant is. Few vessels sink with their own weight, and without some exterior violence. Let us cast our eyes where we will; every thing about us totters: look into all the great states, both of christendom and elsewhere, that are known to us, you will there see evident menaces of alteration and ruin.

Et sua sunt illis incommoda, perque per omnes
Tempestas †.

They all of them do in misfortunes share,
And the rude tempest rages every-where.

Astrologers may very well as they do, warn us of great revolutions, and approaching changes: their starry prophesies are present and palpable, they need not look up to heaven to foretel this. There is not only consolation to be extracted from this universal combination of ills and menaces, but moreover, some hopes of the continuation of our state; forasmuch as naturally nothing falls, where all does. An universal sickness is particular health: conformity is an enemy to dissolution. For my part, I despair not, and fancy that I discover ways to save us.

Deus hæc fortasse benigna
Reducet in sedem vice ‖.

The gods perhaps with gracious sway
Will soon restore the happy day.

Who knows but that God will have it happen, as it does

* Lucan. lib. i. v. 138. † Virg. Æneid. 88. ‖ Horat. Epod. 13 v. 10.

does in human bodies, that are purged, and recover a better ſtate by long and grievous maladies; which reſtore them a more intire and perfect health, than that which they took from them? What weighs the moſt with me, is, that in reckoning the ſymptoms of our ill, I ſee as many natural ones, and ſuch as heaven ſends us, and that are properly its own, as of thoſe that are owing to our irregularity and imprudence. The very ſtars ſeem to declare, that we have continued long enough, and beyond the ordinary term: and this alſo afflicts me, that the neareſt miſchief which threatens us, is, not an alteration in the intire and ſolid maſs, but its diſſipation and divulſion; the extremeſt of all our fears.

I moreover fear, leſt in theſe ravings of mine, the treachery of my memory, ſhould through inadvertence make me write the ſame thing twice. I hate to examine myſelf; and never review, but with an ill-will, what has once eſcaped my pen. I here ſet down nothing new of inſtruction. Theſe are common thoughts; and having, peradventure, conceived them an hundred times, I am afraid I have ſet them down ſomewhere elſe already. Repetition is every where diſguſting, though it were in Homer; but 'tis ruinous in things that have only a ſuperficial and tranſitory ſhew. I do not love inculcation, even in uſeful things, as in Seneca. And I don't like the cuſtom of the ſtoical ſchool, to repeat upon every ſubject at length, the principles and preſuppoſitions that ſerve in general, and always to re-alledge common and univerſal reaſons.

My memory grows infinitely worſe every day than other:

Pocula Lethæos ut ſi ducentia ſomnos,
Arente fauce traxerim. *

Apt to let ſlip my argument or theme,
As if I had drank deep of Lethe's ſtream.

Though hitherto, thanks be to god, no difficulty has happened; and though others ſeek time and opportunity to think of what they have to ſay, I muſt for the future avoid all ſuch preparation, for fear of tying myſelf to ſome indiſpenſable obligation. To be tied and bound

* Horat. epod. 14. v. 3.

bound to a thing, and to depend upon so weak an instrument as my memory, puts me quite out: I never read this following story, but I am offended at it with a proper and natural resentment. Lyncestes, accused of conspiracy against Alexander, the day that he was brought before the army, according to custom, to be heard what he could say for himself, had prepared a studied speech †; of which, with hesitation and trembling he pronounced some words; but still more perplext, whilst he was struggling with his memory, and recollecting what he had to say, the soldiers neareſt to him levelled their pikes at him, and killed him, looking upon him as guilty. His astonishment and silence they judged as a confession. For having had so much leisure to prepare himself in prison, they concluded that it was not his memory that failed him, but that his conscience hamper'd his tongue, and stopped his speech. This was very truly said. The place, the spectators, and the expectation, astonish him, even at the time, when it was incumbent on him to speak the best he could. What can a man do, when his life is dependant on his oratory?

For my part, the very being tied to what I am to say is enough to make me lose hold of it. When I wholly commit and refer myself to my memory, I lay so much stress upon it, that it sinks under me, and startles at the burthen. So much as I trust to it, so much do I put myself out of my own power, even so as to know what countenance to put on; and have been sometimes very much put to it to conceal the slavery wherein I was shackled; when at the time my design was to manifest in speaking, a perfect negligence both of face and accent, and to shew casual and unpremeditated motions, as rising from present occasions; chusing rather to say nothing to purpose, than to shew that I came prepared to speak well; a thing especially unbecoming a man of my profession, and a thing of too great obligation upon him that cannot retain much; the preparation is far short of producing the expected effect. A man oft strips himself to his doublet to leap no further than he would have done in his gown. "Nihil est his qui

"placere

† Q. Curt. lib. vii c. 1.

" placere volunt, tam adverſarium, quam expectatio *. ' Nothing is ſo mortifying to thoſe who are deſirous ' to pleaſe, as raiſing an expectation of 'em before-' hand." It is recorded of the orator Curio †, that when he propoſed the diviſion of his oration into three or four parts, it often happened, either that he forgot ſome one, or added one or two more. I have always avoided falling into this inconvenience, out of a hatred to theſe promiſes and preſcriptions, not only from a diſtruſt of my memory, but alſo becauſe this method reliſhes too much of the artiſt. " Simpliciora militares " decent." 'Tis enough that in the mind I am in at preſent, I will never more take upon me to ſpeak in a place of reſpect; for as to ſpeaking, when a man reads his ſpeech, beſides that it is very abſurd, it is a mighty diſadvantage to thoſe who naturally could give it a grace by action; and much leſs will I throw myſelf upon the mercy of my preſent invention; 'tis heavy and preplext, and ſuch as would never furniſh me in ſudden and important neceſſities.

Permit, reader, this eſſay its courſe alſo, and this third fitting to finiſh the reſt of my picture, I add, but I correct not; firſt, becauſe I conceive, that a man having once made a transfer of his labours to the world, he has no farther right to them; let him do better if he can in ſome new undertaking, but not adulterate what he has already ſold; of ſuch dealers nothing ſhould be bought till after they are dead: let them well conſider what they do, before they produce them to the light. Who haſtens them? my book is always the ſame, ſaving that upon every new edition, (that the buyer may not go away quite empty handed) I take the liberty to add as it were by an ill-jointed inlaying) ſome few things ſupernumerary. They are no other but over-weight, that do not disfigure the primitive form of thoſe eſſays, but by a little ambitious ſubtilty, give a kind of particular repute to every one of thoſe that follow. From thence however there will eaſily happen ſome tranſpoſition of chronology, my ſtories taking place according to their fitneſs, and not always

* Cic. Acad. lib. iv. c. 4. † Cicero in lib. de claris oratoribus, c. 60.

ways according to the age. Secondly, because that for what concerns myself, I fear to lose by the change: my understanding does not always go forward, it goes backward too. I do not much less suspect my fancies for being the second or the third, than for being the first, either present, or past; we oft correct ourselves as foolishly as we do others. I am grown older by a great many years since my first publications, which were in the year 1586: But I very much doubt whether I am grown an inch the wiser. I now, and I anon, are two several persons; but whether the better, now, or anon, I am not able to determine. It were a fine thing to be old, if we only travelled towards improvement; but 'tis a drunken, stumbling, reeling, ill-favoured motion, like that of reeds, which the air casually waves to and fro as it lists.

Antiochus had in his youth written strenuously in favour of the academy *, but in his old age he wrote as much against it: which of these two soever I should follow, would not he be still Antiochus? after having established the uncertainty, to go about to establish the certainty of human opinions, was it not to establish doubt, and not certainty, and to promise, that had he yet another age to live, he would be always upon terms of altering his judgment, not so much for the better, as for something else? the public favour has given me a little more confidence than I expected; but what I most fear, is, lest I should glut the world with my writings: I had rather of the two spur my reader than tire him: as a learned man of my time has done. Praise is always pleasing, let it come from whom, or upon what account it will; yet ought a man to understand why he is commended, that he may be self-consistent. The vulgar and common esteem is seldom right; and I am mistaken, if amongst the writings of my time, the worst are not those which have most gained the popular applause. For my part, I return my thanks to those good-natured men, who are pleased to take my weak endeavours in good part. The faults of the workmanship are no where so apparent, as in a matter which of itself has no recommendation. Blame me not, reader,

* Cicer. Acad. Quæst. l. iv. c. 22.

der, for thoſe that ſlip in here, by the fancy or inadvertency of others; every hand, every artizan, contribute their own materials. I neither concern myſelf with orthography (and only direct it after the old way) nor pointing, being very unexpert both in the one and the other. Where they wholly break the ſenſe, I am very little concerned, for they at leaſt diſcharge me; but where they ſubſtitute a falſe one, as they ſo often do, and wreſt me to their conception, they ruin me. When the ſentence nevertheleſs is not ſtrong enough for my proportion, a civil perſon ought to reject it as none of mine. Whoever ſhall know how lazy I am, and how indulgent to my own humour, will eaſily believe that I had rather write as many more eſſays, than be ty'd to reviſe theſe over again for ſo puerile a correction.

I was ſaying elſewhere, that being planted in the deepeſt mine of this new metal, i. e. the very center of this new religion, I am not only deprived of any great familiarity with men of other kinds of manners than my own, and of other opinions, by which they hold together, as by a tie that ſuperſedes all other obligations; but moreover, I do not live without danger, amongſt men, towhom all things are equally lawful, and of whom the moſt part cannot offend the laws more than they have already done; from whence the extremeſt degree of licentiouſneſs does proceed. All the particular circumſtances reſpecting me being conſidered, I do not find one man of my country, who pays ſo dear for the defence of our laws both in coſt and damages (as the lawyers ſay) as myſelf. And ſome there are who brag of their ardor and zeal, that if things were juſtly weighed, do much leſs than I. My houſe as one that has ever been free to all comers, and at the ſervice of all, (for I could never be induced to make a garriſon of it, which is moſt deſired when the war is fartheſt off) has ſufficiently merited a popular kindneſs, and ſo that it would be a hard matter to inſult over me upon my own dung-hill; and I look upon it as a wonderful and exemplary thing, that it yet continues a virgin free from blood and plunder during ſo long a ſtorm, and ſo many revolutions and tumults in the neighbourhood. For, to confeſs the truth, it had been

poſſible

poſſible enough, for a man of my complexion, to have quitted any one conſtant and continued form whatever. But the contrary invaſions and incurſions, alterations and viciſſitudes of fortune round about me, have hitherto more exaſperated than mollified the humour of the country, and involve me in freſh difficulties and dangers that are invincible.

I eſcape, 'tis true, but am troubled that it is more by chance, and ſomething of my own prudence, than by juſtice, and am not ſatisfied to be out of the protection of the laws, and under any other ſafe-guard than theirs. As matters ſtand, I live above one half by the favour of others, which is an untoward obligation. I do not like to owe my ſafety either to the generoſity or affection of great perſons, who concur in my legality and liberty, or to the obliging manners of my predeceſſors, or my own. For what if I was another kind of man? If my deportment, and the frankneſs of my converſation oblige my neighbours or relations, 'tis cruel that they ſhould acquit themſelves of that obligation, in only permitting me to live; and that they ſhould ſay, 'We allow him the free liberty of having divine ſervice read in his own private chapel, all the churches round about being deſtroyed, and grant him the uſe of his goods, and the fruition of his life, as one that protects our wives and cattle in time of need.' For my houſe has for many deſcents ſhared in the reputation of Lycurgus, the Athenian, who was the general truſtee and treaſurer of his fellow-citizens *. Now I am clearly of opinion, that a man ſhould live by his own right and authority, and not either by recompence or favour. How many gallant men have rather choſe to loſe life, than to owe it? I hate to ſubject myſelf to any ſort of obligation, but above all, to the dues of honour. I think nothing ſo expenſive to me as what is given me, and that becauſe my will lies at pawn under the title of gratitude, and more willingly accept of offices that are to be ſold; being really of opinion, that for the laſt I give nothing but money, but for the other I give myſelf.

The

* Plutarch in the lives of the ten Orators, of whom Lycurgus was the 7th, c. 1.

The tie that holds me by the laws of courteſy, binds me, I think, more than that of legal conſtraint; and I am much more at eaſe when bound by a ſcivener, than by myſelf. Is it not reaſon that my conſcience ſhould be much more engaged when men ſimply rely upon it? In a bond, my Faith owes nothing becauſe it has nothing lent it. Let them truſt to the faith and ſecurity they have taken, which is not mine; I had much rather break the wall of a priſon, and the laws themſelves, than my probity and word, I am nice, even to ſuperſtition, in keeping my promiſes, and therefore upon all occaſions have a care to make them uncertain and conditional. To thoſe of no great moment, I add the jealouſy of my own rule to make it weight; it racks and oppreſſes me with its own intereſt. Even in actions that are wholly my own, and free, if I once ſay it, I conceive that I have bound myſelf, and that delivering it to the knowledge of another, I have poſitively enjoined it to my own performance. Methinks I promiſe it, if I but ſay it, and therefore am not apt to ſay much of that kind. The ſentence that I paſs upon myſelf is ſharper and more ſevere than that of a judge who only conſiders it in the light of a common obligation; but my conſcience looks upon it with a more ſevere and penetrating eye. I lag in thoſe duties to which I ſhould be compelled if I did not go. "Hoc ipſum "ita juſtum eſt quod recte fit, ſi eſt voluntarium *. 'Even that which is well done, is only juſt, when 'tis voluntary.' If the action has not ſome ſplendor of liberty, it has neither grace nor honour.

Quod me jus cogit, vix voluntate impetrent †.

That which the laws have power to conſtrain,
They from my will would hardly e'er obtain.

Where neceſſity draws me, I love to let my will take its own courſe. "Quia quicquid imperio cogitur ex-"igenti magis quam præſtanti acceptum refertur. For 'whatever is compelled by power, is more aſcribed to 'him that exacts, than to him that performs it.' I know ſome who follow this rule, even to injuſtice, who will ſooner give than reſtorer, ſooner lend than pay, and

* Cicero de offic. lib. i. c. 9.

† Ter. Adel. act 3. ſcene 5. v. 44. of Dacier's edit.

will do them the least good to whom they are most obliged. I am of a quite contrary humour.

I so much love to disengage and release myself, that I have sometimes looked upon the ingratitude, affronts and indignities which I have received from those, to whom either by nature or accident I was bound in some duty of friendship, as an advantage to me, taking this occasion of their ill usage, for an acquittance and discharge of so much of my debt. And though I still continue to pay them all the apparent offices of common civility, I notwithstanding find myself very sparing of doing that upon the account of justice, which I did upon the score of affection, and am a little eased of my former attention and solicitude by my inward will. "Est prudentis sustinere ut cursum, sic impetum benevolentiæ *. 'Tis the part of a wise man to 'keep as tight a curb upon the heat of his friendship, 'as upon the fury of his horse;' my friendship, being too urging and pressing where I take, at least, for a man who loves not to be importuned. And this husbanding my friendship serves me for a sort of consolation in the imperfections of those with whom I am concerned. I am sorry they are the less to be valued for it, but so it is, that I also diminish in my application and engagement towards them. I approve of a man that is the less fond of his child for having a scald-head or being crooked, and not only when he is ill natured, but also when he is unhappy and base born, (for God himself has made abatement from his value and natural estimation) provided he carry himself in this coldness of affection with moderation and exact justice. Proximity lessens not defects with me, but rather makes them greater.

After all, according to what I understand in the science of benefits and acknowledgment (which is a subtle science and of great use) I know no person whatever more free and less indebted than I am at this hour. What I do owe, is simply to common and natural obligations; as to any thing else, no man is more absolutely clear.

—*nec*

* Cicero de Amicitia, c. 17.

——— *nec ſunt mihi nota potentum*
Munera *. ———

Nor are the gifts of men in power known to me. Princes give me enough, if they take nothing from me; and do me good enough, if they do me no harm: That is all I aſk of them. Oh, how am I obliged to Almighty God, who has been pleaſed that I ſhould receive all I have, immediately from his bounty, and particularly reſerved all my obligation to himſelf! How earneſtly do I beg of his divine mercy, that I may never owe real thanks to any one! O happy liberty wherein I have hitherto lived! May it continue with me to the laſt. I endeavour to have no abſolute need of any one. "*In* "*me omnis ſpes eſt mihi* †. All my hope is in myſelf.' This is what every one may be able to place in himſelf, but more eaſily they whom God has ſheltered from natural and urgent neceſſities. It is a wretched and dangerous thing to depend upon another. Ourſelves, on whom is our moſt juſt and ſafeſt dependance, are not ſufficiently aſſured. I have nothing mine but myſelf, and yet the poſſeſſion is in part defective and borrowed. I fortify myſelf both in courage, which is the ſtrongeſt aſſiſtant ‖, and alſo in fortune, therein to ſatisfy myſelf though every thing elſe ſhould forſake me. *Eleus Hippias* ¶ did not only furniſh himſelf with ſcience, that

* Virg. Æneid. lib. xii. v. 519. † Ter. Adelph. Act. 3. ſcene 5. v. 9. ‖ In the fourth edition of 1588, when this part of his work was firſt publiſhed, Montaigne only ſays, "I "cultivate and enlarge myſelf with all the care I can, that I "may have wherewithal to ſatisfy me when I am by all abandoned." 'Tis my opinion that it would have been beſt if he had ſtopped there; becauſe "for a man to arm himſelf with courage "ſo as to be contented, though he ſhould be on all ſides aban"doned," is the greateſt effort that man is capable of. Nor is this point attainable but by practice, which whoever has once arrived to, he has nothing more to do but to perſiſt in it, in order to be ſheltered from the inſults of fortune. Now to add after this "to fortify himſelf in fortune," &c. is reducing the firſt thought to nothing, or making a diſtinction where in fact there is none. This criticiſm does not appear to me to be too refined; If it be, I conſent that it may not have a place in any future edition of Montaigne's Eſſays.

¶ Eleus Hippias made his boaſt at the Olympic games, that there was nothing in any art of which he was ignorant, not only,

he might at need chearfully retire from all other company to enjoy the muſes, or with the knowledge of philoſophy only to teach his ſoul to be contented with it, and bravely to ſubſiſt without external conveniencies, when fate would have it ſo; he was moreover ſo curious, as to learn cookery, to ſhave himſelf, to make his own cloaths, his own ſhoes and drawers, and, as far as poſſible, to rely upon himſelf, and to ſhift without the aſſiſtance of others. A man more freely and chearfully enjoys borrowed conveniencies, when it is not an enjoyment forced and conſtrained by neceſſity, and when a man has in his own will and fortune wherewithal to live without them. I know myſelf very well. But I can hardly expect to meet with ſuch pure generoſity, ſuch free and frank hoſpitality from any perſon, as would not appear to me unhandſom, tyrannical, and tainted with reproach, if neceſſity had reduced me to it. As giving is an ambitious quality and prerogative, ſo is accepting a quality of ſubmiſſion. Witneſs the injurious and quarrelſome refuſal that Bajazet made of the preſents that Themir ſent him: and thoſe that were offered in the behalf of the emperor Solyman to the emperor of Calicut, were ſo much diſdained by him, that he not only rudely rejected them; ſaying, that neither he nor any of his predeceſſors had ever been wont to take, and that it was their office to give; but moreover cauſed the ambaſſadors ſent for that purpoſe to be put into a dungeon. When Thetis, ſays Ariſtotle, flatters Jupiter, when the Lacedæmonians flatter the Athenians, the y never put them in mind of the good they have done them, which is always odious, but of the benefits they have received from them; they who I ſee ſo familiarly employ every one in their affairs, and thruſt themſelves into ſo much Obligation,

ly of the liberal arts, as geometry, muſic, literature and poetry, together with natural philoſophy, ethicks and politics, but that he made with his own hand the ring and the very cloathes he wore, &c. as above. Cicero de oratore, lib. iii c. 32. If at the time here mentioned there had been public places in Greece, where men of the firſt rank had ſpent the prime of life in ſplendor, in gaming, or in doing nothing, poor Hippias, inſtead of gaining applauſe at the Olympic games, would have been hiſſed out of the theatre.

obligation, would never do it, did they but reliſh the ſweetneſs of pure liberty as I do, and did they but weigh, as wiſe men ſhould, the burthen of an obligation. 'Tis ſometimes peradventure returned, but 'tis never diſſolved; this is a miſerable ſlavery to a man that loves to be at full liberty upon all accounts. My acquaintance, both better and meaner men than myſelf, are able to ſay whether they have ever known a man leſs importuning, ſoliciting, entreating, and leſs burdenſome to others than I have been. And in this, 'tis no great wonder, if I am not to be parallel'd, ſince ſo many parts of my manners contribute to it; as a little natural pride; an impatience of being refuſed; the contradiction of my deſires and deſigns; an incapacity for all kinds of buſineſs; and my moſt beloved qualities, idleneſs, and freedom; from all theſe together I have conceived a mortal hatred to being obliged to or by any other than myſelf. I leave no ſtone unturned, rather than employ the beneficence of another in any ſlight or important occaſion or neceſſity whatever. My friends do ſtrangely importune me, when they adviſe me to call in a third perſon; and I think it as painful to diſengage him who is indebted to me, by making uſe of him, as it is to engage myſelf to him that owes me nothing: theſe conditions being removed, provided they requ're of me nothing of any great trouble or care, (for I have declared mortal war againſt all care) I am eaſily intreated, and ready to do ſervice to every one that needs it. But yet I have, I confeſs, more avoided receiving than ſought occaſions of giving; and, according to Ariſtotle, it is much more eaſy. My fortune has allowed me but little to do others good withal, and the little it can afford is put into a pretty cloſe hand. Had I been born to be a perſon of rank, I ſhould have been ambitious to have made myſelf beloved, not to make myſelf feared or admired; ſhall I more vainly expreſs it? I ſhould have been as proud to pleaſe as to do good. Cyrus very wiſely, and, by the mouth of a great captain, and better philoſopher, prefers his bounty and benefits much before his valour and warlike conqueſts. And the elder Scipio, where-ever he would raiſe his eſteem, ſets a higher value upon his affability and humanity, than

his proweſs and victories, and has always this glorious ſaying in his mouth, "that he has given his ene-"mies as much cauſe to love him, as his friends." I will ſay then, that if a man muſt of neceſſity owe ſomething, it ought to be by a more lawful claim than that whereof I am ſpeaking, to the neceſſity I am engaged in by this miſerable war; and not by ſo great a debt as that of my total preſervation; a debt that overwhelms me. I have a thouſand times gone to bed at my own houſe with an apprehenſion that I ſhould be betrayed and murdered that very night, compounding with fortune, that it might be without terror, and with quick diſpatch; and after my pater noſter have cried out,

Impius hæc tam culta novalia miles habebit * ?

Shall impious ſoldiers have theſe new-plow'd lands? What remedy? 'tis the place of my birth, and moſt of my anceſtors have here fixed their affection and name; we harden ourſelves to whatever we are accuſtomed. And in ſo miſerable a condition as ours is, cuſtom is a great bounty of nature, which takes off the acuteneſs of many evils that we ſuffer. A civil war has this with it worſe than other wars have, to make us all ſtand centry in our own houſes.

Quam miſerum, portâ vitam muroque tueri,
Vixque ſuæ tutum viribus eſſe domus †!

To ones own walls and gates, 'tis wretched ſure
To truſt one's life, yet ſcarce to be ſecure.

'Tis a grievous extremity for a man to be ſtraitened for room, and to be diſturbed in his own houſe. The country where I live is always the firſt that takes up arms, and the laſt that lays them down, and which never enjoys an intire calm.

Tum quoque cum pax eſt, trepidant formidine belli ‖.

In time of peace, they quake for fear of war.

——— quoties pacem fortuna laceſſit;
Hac iter eſt bellis; melius, fortuna dediſſet
Orbe ſub Eoo ſedem, gelidaque ſub Arcto
Errantesque domos ¶.

Oh

* Virg. eclog. 1. v. 71. † Ovid. triſt. lib. iv. eleg. 1. v. 69. ‖ Ovid. triſt. lib. iii. eleg. 10. v. 67. ¶ Lucan. lib. i. v. 255, 256 ——— 251. 252. 253.

Oh ill built city, too too near the Gaul!
Oh ſadly ſituated place! when all
The world hath peace, this is the ſcene of war,
And firſt that is invaded; happier far
Might we have liv'd in fartheſt North or Eaſt,
Or wand'ring tents of Scythia, than poſſeſt
The edge of Italy.

My careleſſneſs and indolence ſometimes fortify me againſt theſe conſiderations, and they do alſo in ſome meaſure lead us on to reſolution. I oft imagine and expect mortal dangers with a kind of delight *. I ſtupidly plunge myſelf head-long into death without conſidering or taking a view of it, as into a dark and deep vortex, which ſwallows me up in a trice, and ſmothers me in an inſtant by a profound ſleep, without any ſenſe of pain, or care. And in theſe ſhort and violent deaths, the conſequence that I foreſee adminiſters more conſolation to me than the effects do fear. They ſay, that as life is not better for being long, ſo death is better for not being long. I do not ſo much avoid the thoughts of death as I enter into confidence with it. I wrap and ſhrowd myſelf in the ſtorm that is to blind and hurry me away with a ſudden and inſenſible attack. Moreover, if it ſhould fall out, (as ſome gardeners ſay of roſes

* To comprehend the author's true meaning here, the words muſt be conſidered with regard to their neceſſary connection with what goes before. Montaigne repreſents himſelf as ſurrounded in his houſe by a gang of banditti, who are authoriſed by war to commit all manner of crimes with impunity. In ſuch a ſituation wherein he is always in danger of having his throat cut, and in a mortal dread of ſeeing himſelf every moment at the mercy of thoſe villains, he one while fancies himſelf actually in their hands; and feeling a kind of pleaſure to be at laſt delivered thereby, on a ſudden, from the continual anguiſh which rendered his life inſupportable. Full of theſe ideas he ſtupidly plunges himſelf headlong, as he ſays above, "into "death, without taking a view of it, as into a dark and deep "vortex, which ſwallows him up, &c." which is as much as to ſay, that by taking this reſolution, he expects, when he leaſt thinks of it, to be in that ſtate of ſurprize and horror from the barbarity of thoſe villains who ſhall come to knock him on the head, or cut his throat before he has time to look about him. The images which Montaigne here makes uſe of are lively but innocent, and very natural, and ſuch as no judicous fair critic will, I believe, ever find fault with.

ſes and violets, that they are more odoriferous by growing near garlic and onions, by reaſon that the laſt ſuck and imbibe what bad ſmell there is in the ſoil,) that theſe depraved natures ſhould alſo attract all the malignity of my air and climate and render me ſo much better and purer by their vicinity, that I ſhould not loſe all; that is not ſo; but there may be ſomething in this, that goodneſs is more beautiful and attractive when it is rare, and that contrariety and diverſity bind and ſhut up well-doing within itſelf, and inflame it by the jealouſy of oppoſition and by vain-glory. Thieves and robbers (of their ſpecial favour) have no particular ſpite at me; no more have I to them: if I had, I ſhould have my hands too full. Conſciences of the ſame caſt are lodged under ſeveral ſorts of robes, like cruelty, treachery, and rapine; and ſo much the worſe as they are the more miſchievous, and the more ſecure, and the darker by being concealed under the colour of the laws. I don't ſo much hate a profeſſed injury, as one that is treachetous; an enemy in arms, as an enemy in a gown. Our fever has ſeized upon a body that is not much the worſe for't. There was fire before, and now 'tis broke out into a flame. The noiſe is greater, the evil much the ſame. I uſually anſwer ſuch as aſk me the reaſon of my travels, "That I know very well what I fly from, "but not what I ſeek." If they tell me that there may be as little health amongſt ſtrangers, and that their manners are no purer than ours: I firſt reply, that that is a hard caſe.

Tam multæ ſcelerum facies *.

Where crimes in many ſhapes abound.

Secondly, that it is always an advantage to change an ill condition for one that is uncertain, and that the ills of others ought not to afflict us ſo much as our own.

I will not here omit, that I never rail ſo much againſt France, as to be out of humour with Paris? that city has ever had my heart from my infancy; and it has fallen out to me, as of excellent things, that the more of other fine cities I have ſeen ſince, the more the beauty of this gains upon my affection. I love it for its own ſake, and more in its own native being, than the addition

* Virg. Georg. lib. i v. 506.

addition of foreign pomp; I love it tenderly, even with all its warts and blemiſhes. I am not a Frenchman but by this great city, great in people, great in the felicity of her ſituation; but above all, great and incomparable in variety and diverſity of commodities; the glory of France, and one of the moſt noble ornaments of the world. May God of his goodneſs drive our diviſions far from it. While it remains intire and united I think it ſafe from all other violence. I give it caution, that of all the parties, that will be the worſt that ſhall ſet it at variance; I have no fear for her, but for her own ſake; and certainly I have as much fear for her as for any other city in the kingdom. Whilſt ſhe ſhall continue, I ſhall never want a retreat where I may be ſafe, ſufficient to make me amends for parting with any other retreat whetever.

'Tis not becauſe Socrates has ſaid ſo, but becauſe it is in truth my own humour, and peradventure too much ſo. I look upon all men as my countrymen, and embrace a Polander as heartily as a Frenchman, preferring the univerſal and common tye, to this national tye. I am not much taken with the ſweetneſs of a native of air: acquaintance wholly new, and wholly my own, appear to me full as good as the other common and accidental ones with our neighbours. Friendſhips that are purely of our own acquiring, ordinarily ſurpaſs thoſe to which we are joined by the communication of the clime or of blood. Nature has placed us in the world free and unbound; we confine ourſelves to certain limits, like the kings of Perſia, who obliged themſelves to drink no other water but that of the river Choaſpes, fooliſhly quit claim to their right of uſage in all other ſtreams; and as far as concerned themſelves, dried up all the other rivers of the world. What Socrates did towards his end, to look upon a ſentence of baniſhment, as worſe than a ſentence of death againſt him, I ſhall, I think, never be ſuch an old fool, or ſo ſtrictly biggotted to my own country, as to be of that opinion. Such celeſtial lives as his have many ideas, which I embrace more by eſteem than affection; and they have ſome alſo ſo elevated and extraordinary, that I cannot embrace them ſo much as by eſteem, forasmuch

much as I cannot conceive them. This humour was very effeminate in a man that thought the whole world his city. It is true, that he diſdained travel, and had hardly ever ſet his foot out of the Attick territories. What ſay you to his grudging the money his friends offered to ſave his life, and his refuſal to come out of priſon by the mediation of others, becauſe he would not diſobey the laws, at a time when they were otherwiſe ſo much corrupted? Theſe examples are of the firſt rate for me; of the ſecond there are others that I could find out in this ſame perſon. Many of theſe rare examples ſurpaſs the force of my action; nay ſome of them do moreover ſurpaſs the force of my judgment.

Theſe reaſons ſet aſide, travel is in my opinion a profitable exerciſe; the ſoul is therein continually employed in obſerving things new and unknown. And I do not know, as I have often ſaid, a better ſchool wherein to form life, than by inceſſantly expoſing to it the diverſity of ſo many other lives, fancies, and uſances; and to make it reliſh ſo perpetual a variety of the forms of human nature. The body is therein neither idle nor overwrought, and this moderate motion puts it in breath. I can keep on horſeback, as much tormented with the ſtone as I am, without alighting or being weary, for eight or ten hours together.

Vires ultra ſortemque ſenectæ *.

Beyond the ſtrength and common lot of age.

No weather hurts me, but the parching heat of a ſcorching ſun; for the umbrella's made uſe of in Italy, ever ſince the time of the antient Romans, are a greater burthen to the arm than a relief to the head. I would fain know where was the induſtry of the Perſians ſo long ago, and in the infancy of their luxury, to make ſuch ventilators, and plant ſuch ſhades about their abodes, as Xenophon reports they did. I love rain, and to dabble in the dirt, like the ducks; the change of air and climate never concern me: every ſky is alike to me. I am only troubled with inward ailments, which I breed within myſelf, and thoſe are not ſo frequent in travel. I am hard to be got out, but when once upon the road, I hold out as well as the beſt. I take as much pains in little,

* Virg. Æneid. lib. vi. v. 114.

little, as in great undertakings; and to equip myſelf, for a ſhort journey, if but to viſit a neighbour, as for a long one. I have learned to travel after the Spaniſh faſhion, and to make but one ſtage of a tolerable length; and in exceſſive heats, I always travel by night, from ſun-ſet, to ſun-riſing. The other method of baiting by the way in haſte and hurry to gobble up a dinner, is, eſpecially in ſhort days, very inconvenient. My horſes thereby perform the better, for never any horſe tired under me, that was able to hold out the firſt day's journey: I water them at every brook I meet, and only take care they have ſo much way to go before I come to my inn, as will digeſt the water in their bellies. My being ſo loth to riſe in a morning, gives my ſervants leiſure to dine at their eaſe before they ſet out. For my own part, I never eat too late; my appetite comes to me in eating, and not elſe, and am never hungry but at table.

Some of my friends blame me for continuing this travelling humour, being married and old. But they are in the wrong; for it is the beſt time for a man to leave his family, when he has put it into a way of ſubſiſting without him, and continuing as he left it. 'Tis indeed much greater imprudence to abandon it to a leſs faithful houſekeeper, and one who will be leſs ſolicitous to look after your affairs.

The moſt uſeful and honourable knowledge and employment for the mother of a family, is the management of houſhold affairs. I ſee ſome that are covetous indeed, but very few that are ſaving. 'Tis the ſupreme quality of a woman, and what a man ought to ſeek after before any other, as the only dowry that tends to ruin or to preſerve our families. Let men ſay what they will, according to the experience I have learned, I require in married women the oeconomical virtue above all other virtues; I put my wife to it, as a concern of her own, leaving her by my abſence the whole government of my affairs. I am aſhamed to ſee, in ſeveral families, the maſter of which has been buſtling about all morning, I am ſorry to ſee him return at noon quite jaded and ruffled to find his madam juſt got out of her bed, and dreſſing herſelf at the toilet. This is for

queens

queens to do; tho' that is a queſtion too. 'Tis ridiculous, and unjuſt, that the lazineſs of our wives ſhould be maintained with our ſweat and labour. No man, foraſmuch as in me lies, ſhall have a clearer and a more quiet and free enjoyment of his eſtate than I. If the huſband furniſh matter, nature herſelf requires that the wife find the form.

As to the duties of conjugal friendſhip, which ſome think to be cooled by this abſence, I am not of that opinion; it is on the contrary an intelligence that eaſily cools and is hurt by a too cloſe and conſtant attendance. Every ſtrange woman appears graceful, and every one finds by experience, that being continually together is not ſo pleaſing, as to part for a time, and meet again. Theſe interruptions give me a freſh guſt to enjoy my family, and render my own houſe more pleaſant to me. Change of place warms my appetite, now to one, then to the other. I know that the arms of friendſhip are long enough to reach and join hands from the one end of the world to the other, and eſpecially, when there is a continual communication of offices that rouſe the obligation and remembrance of it. The Stoicks ſay, that there is ſo great a connection and relation amongſt wiſe men, that he who dines in France, feeds his companion in Egypt; and that whoever does but hold out his finger, in what part of the world ſoever, all the wiſe men upon the habitable earth feel themſelves aſſiſted by it. Fruition and poſſeſſion principally appertain to the imagination; and this more fervently and conſtantly embraces what it is in queſt of, than what we have hold of. Let a man but conſider his daily amuſements, and he will find, that he is moſt abſent from his friend when in his company. His preſence releaſes your attention, and gives your thoughts liberty to abſent themſelves at every turn, for every occaſion. When I am at Rome, I keep and govern my houſe, and the conveniencies I there left, ſee my walls riſe, my trees ſhoot, and my revenue increaſe, or decreaſe, very near as well as when I am there.

Ante oculos errat domus, errat forma locorum *.

My

* Ovid. triſt. lib. iii. eleg. 4.

My houſe, and forms of places conſtantly
Preſent themſelves unto my fancy's eye.

If we enjoy nothing but what we touch, we may ſay farewel to the money in our cloſets, and to our ſons when they are gone a hunting. We will have them nearer to us. Is the garden, or half a day's journey from home ſo far? What is ten leagues, far or near? If near, what is eleven, twelve, or thirteen? and ſo on by degrees. In earneſt, if there be a woman who can tell her huſband what ſtep ends the near, and what ſtep begins the remote, I would adviſe her to ſtop between the two.

——— *excludat jurgia finis.*

Some certain point ſhould finiſh the debate.

Utor permiſſo, caudæque pilos ut equinæ
Paulatim vello: et demo unum, demo etiam unum,
Dum cadat elufus ratione ruentis acervi †.

I take the grant, and by degrees prevail;
Thus hair by hair, I pluck the horſe's tail,
And while I take them one by one away
The Numbers to a Nought at laſt decay.

And let them in God's name call philoſophy to their aſſiſtance; in whoſe teeth it may be caſt, that ſince it neither diſcerns the one nor the other end of the joint, betwixt the too much and the little, the long and the ſhort, the light and the heavy, the near and the remote; and ſince it diſcovers neither the beginning nor the end, it muſt needs judge very uncertainly of the middle. "Re- "rum natura nullam nobis dedit cognitionem finium *. 'Nature has not given us any knowledge of the end of 'things.' Are they not ſtill wives and friends to the dead, who are not only at the end of this, but in the other world? we include thoſe who have been, and thoſe who are not yet, much more the abſent. We did not promiſe in marriage to be continually brooding and twining together, like ſome little animals that we ſee, or tied like thoſe of Karenty ‖, that were ſo bewitched in

† Horat. lib. ii. Ep. 1. v. 33. 45. 46. 47. * Cicer. Acad. lib. iv. c. 29. ‖ 'Tis Saxo Grammaticus that has left us the ſtory of theſe hag-ridden creatures, in the 14th book of his hiſtory of Denmark; where, ſpeaking of the converſion of the people of Rugen, an iſland in the Baltic; he ſays,

in the conjunctive mood, that they clung together ever after like the canine race. And a wife ought not so greedily to fix her eyes on her husband's fore-parts, that she cannot endure to see him turn his back, if occasion be. But may not this saying of that excellent painter of women's humours be here introduced, to shew the reason of their complaints?

Uxor, si cesses, aut te amare cogitat,
Aut tete amari, aut potare, aut animo obsequi,
Et tibi bene esse soli, cum sibi sit male *.

Thy wife, if thou stay'st long abroad, is mov'd,
Thinking thou either lov'st, or art belov'd;
Drinking, or something else, thyself to please,
And that thou'rt well, whilst she is ill at at ease.

Or may it not be, that of itself opposition and contradiction entertains and nourishes them, and that they sufficiently accommodate themselves, provided they incommode you?

In true friendship, wherein I am expert, I more give myself to my friend, than I attract him to me. I am not only better pleased in doing him service, than if he did me one; but moreover, had rather he should do himself good than me, and he most serves me when he does so. And if absence be either pleasant or convenient for him, 'tis more acceptable to me than his presence; neither is it properly absence, when there are means of corresponding. I have sometimes made good use of our separation. We better filled, and further extended the possession of life in being parted. He lived, rejoiced, and saw for me, and I for him, as plainly as if he had himself been there; one part remained idle, and we confounded one another when we were together. The distance

says, that, the inhabitants of Karanti, or Kerantia, one of their towns, after having renounced their worship of idols, were nevertheless still afraid of their power, remembering how often they had been punished for their lewdness, when both sexes were tied together in the action after the manner of dogs, and even faster. Sometimes when they were taken in the fact they were, for the diversion of the people, hoisted upon a perch, the man on one side, and the woman on the other, without being able to separate. If this fact was true, one could hardly help inferring, that the devil was at that time much more severe or more mischievous than he is now.

* Ter Adel. act 1. scene 1. v. 7 &c.

diſtance of place rendered the conjunction of our will more rich. This inſatiable deſire of perſonal preſence, implies ſome weakneſs in the fruition of ſouls.

As for old age, which is alledged againſt me, 'tis for youth on the contrary to ſubject itſelf to the common opinions, and to crub itſelf for the ſake of others. It has wherewithal to pleaſe both the people and its ſelf; we have but too much ado to pleaſe ourſelves alone. As natural conveniencies fail us, let us ſupport ourſelves with thoſe that are artificial. 'Tis injuſtice to excuſe youth for purſuing its pleaſures, and to forbid old men to ſeek them. When young, I concealed my wanton paſſions with prudence; now I am old, I get rid of melancholy ones by a debauch *. Sure it is that the Platonick laws forbade travel till forty or fifty years old, that it might be more uſeful and inſtructive at ſo mature an age. I ſhould ſooner ſubſcribe to this other ſecond article of the ſame laws, which forbids it after threeſcore; for at ſuch an age you will never return from a long journey. What care I for that? I undertake it neither to return nor to finiſh it. I do it only to keep myſelf in motion whilſt motion pleaſes me, and only walk for the walk's ſake. They who hunt after a benefice, or a hare, run not; they only run who run at priſon-baſe, and to exerciſe their running. My deſign is diviſible throughout, it is not grounded upon any great hopes; every day concludes my expectation. And the journey of my life is carried on after the ſame manner; and yet I have ſeen places enough far off, where I could have wiſhed to have been detained. And why not, if Chryſippus, Cleanthes, Diogenes, Zeno, Antipater, ſo many ſages

* If that be, as I really think, Montaigne's ſentiment, the word Debauch muſt be taken in a moderate ſenſe, and ſuch as is ſuitable to Montaigne's genius and character, and to the ſubject he here treats of, that is to ſay, to his paſſion for travel, which he is pleaſed to term a debauch, by an excurſion which is very common to him. There is ſcarce any writer who has more need than Montaigne of a judicious reader, and one eſpecially that is fair and candid. His ſtile, which abounds with bold expreſſions and figures, is very likely to deceive a cavilling cenſor, or to give a handle to thoſe ill-natured critics, who, without regard to truth, boldly cenſure the moſt innocent expreſſions, when they think they can repreſent them to other perſons in a criminal light.

of the soureſt ſect †, chearfully abandoned their country without occaſion to complain of it, and only for the enjoyment of another air? In earneſt, that which moſt diſpleaſes me in all my travels, is, that I cannot reſolve to ſettle my abode where I ſhould beſt like, but that I muſt always propoſe to myſelf to return, to accommodate myſelf to the common humours.

If I feared to die in any other place than that of my birth; if I thought I ſhould die more uneaſily remote from my own family, I ſhould hardly go out of France; I ſhould not without fear ſtep out of my pariſh; for I feel death always twitching me by the throat, or by the back: But I am of another temper, death is in all places alike to me; yet might I have my choice, I think I ſhould rather chooſe to die on horſeback than in a bed, out of my own houſe, and far enough from my own people. There is more heart-breaking than conſolation in taking leave of one's friends; I am willing to omit this act of civility; for, of all the offices of friendſhip, that is the only one that is unpleaſant; and I could with all my heart forget to bid this great and eternal farewel. If there be any convenience in ſo many ſtanders-by, it produces a hundred inconveniencies. I have ſeen many miſerably dying, ſurrounded with all this train: 'Tis a crowd that choaks them. 'Tis againſt duty, and a teſtimony of little kindneſs, and little care, to permit you to die in quiet; one torments your eyes, another afflicts your ears, another tires your faultering tongue; you have neither ſenſe nor limb that is not battered and bruiſed by them: your heart melts with pity to hear the lamentation of thoſe that are your real friends, and perhaps with vexation, to hear the bewailings of others that are feigned and counterfeit. Whoever has been delicate in his taſte, when well, is much more ſo in his weakneſs. In ſuch a neceſſity a gentle hand is required, and ſuitable to his ſentiments, to ſcratch him juſt in the place where he itches, or not to meddle with him at all. As we ſtood in need of a knowing

† Chryſippus was of Soles, Cleanthes of Aſſos, Diogenes of Babylon, Zeno of Citium in the iſle of Cyprus, Antipater of Tarſus, all ſtoic philoſophers, who paſſed their lives at Athens, as Plutarch has obſerved in his treatiſe of baniſhment, c. 12.

knowing woman * to bring us into the world, we have much more need of a wiſer man to help us out of it. Such a one, and a friend to boot, a man ought to purchaſe at any rate for ſuch an occaſion. I am not yet arrived to ſuch a pitch of bravery and ſelf-ſufficiency, as to diſdain all aſſiſtance, or defy all trouble in that hour. I endeavour to hide myſelf, and to make my exit by ſtealth, not thro' fear, but by art. I do not intend in this act of dying to give proof, and make a ſhew of my conſtancy. For whom ſhould I do it? all the right and title I have to reputation will then ceaſe. I content myſelf with a death collected within itſelf, quiet, ſolitary, and all my own, ſuitable to my retired and private life. Quite contrary to the Roman ſuperſtition, where a man was looked upon as unhappy, who died without ſpeaking, and that had not his neareſt relations to cloſe his eyes. I have enough to do to comfort myſelf, without giving myſelf the trouble of conſoling others; too many thoughts in my head, to need that circumſtances ſhould poſſeſs me with new; and matter enough to entertain myſelf withal without borrowing. This critical minute is out of the ſhare of ſociety, 'tis the act of one ſingle perſon. Let us live, and be merry amongſt our friends, let us go among ſtrangers to repine and die. A man may find thoſe for his money that will ſhift his pillow, and rub his feet, and trouble him no more than he would have them; who will preſent him with an indifferent countenance, and ſuffer him to govern himſelf, and to complain according to his own method. I wean myſelf daily by my reaſon from this childiſh and inhumane humour, of deſiring by our ſufferings to move the compaſſion and mourning of our friends. We ſtretch our inconveniencies beyond their juſt extent when we extract tears from them, and the conſtancy in which we commend every one who ſupports his own adverſe fortune, we accuſe and reproach in our friends when the caſe is our own; we are not ſatisfied that they ſhould be ſenſible of our condition only, unleſs they be moreover afflicted. A man ſhould extend his joy, but as much as he can, contract his grief: he that makes himſelf lamented with-

* viz, A midwife, called in French Sage Femme.

out reaſon, is a man not to be lamented when there ſhall be real cauſe. To be always complaining, is the way never to be lamented; and he who too often calls for pity, is never commiſerated by any. He that feigns himſelf dying when he is alive, is ſubject to be thought likely to live when he is dying. I have ſeen ſome, who have taken it in dudgeon when they have been told that they looked well, and that their pulſe was regular, who refrained laughter, becauſe it betrayed a recovery, and hated health, becauſe it was not to be lamented: and which is much worſe, they were not women. I deſcribe my infirmities, but ſuch as they really are, at moſt, and avoid all ominous expreſſions and formal exclamations. If not mirth, at leaſt a ſedate countenance in the ſtanders-by, is proper in the preſence of a wiſe ſick man. He does not quarrel with health, for ſeeing himſelf in a contrary condition. He is pleaſed to contemplate it ſound and intire in others, and to enjoy it at leaſt for company. He does not, becauſe he feels himſelf melt away, abandon all thoughts of life, nor avoid common converſation. I am inclinable to ſtudy ſickneſs whilſt I am well; when it has ſeized me it will make its impreſſion real enough, without the help of my imagination. We prepare ourſelves before-hand for the journey we undertake and reſolve upon; we leave the appointment of the hour when to take horſe, to the company, and in their favour defer it. I find this unexpected advantage in the publication of my manners, that it in ſome ſort ſerves me for a rule. I have ſometimes ſome conſideration of not betraying the hiſtory of my life. This public declaration obliges me to keep on my way, and not to give the lye to the image I have drawn of my qualities, commonly leſs deformed and contradicted than the malignity and infirmity of the judgments of this age would have them. The uniformity and ſimplicity of my manners produce a face of eaſy interpretation, but becauſe the faſhion is a little new, and unaccuſtomed, it gives great opportunity to ſlander. Yet ſo it is, that whoever will go about juſtly to injure me, I do think I ſo aſſiſt his malice by my known and avowed imperfections, that he may that way glut his ill-nature, without ſkirmiſhing with the wind.

wind. If I myſelf, to prevent the accuſation and diſcovery, confeſs enough to make his ſatyr toothleſs, as he conceives, he is welcome to make uſe of his right of amplification, and extenſion; (offence has its rights beyond juſtice;) and let him make the roots of thoſe vices, I have laid open to him, ſhoot up into trees: let him make his uſe, not only of thoſe I am really infected with, but alſo of thoſe that only threaten me; injurious vices both in quality and number. Let him cudgel me that way. I ſhould willingly follow the example of the philoſopher Bion *. Antigonus being about to reproach him with the meanneſs of his birth, he preſently cut him ſhort with this declaration †, "I "am, ſaid he, the ſon of a ſlave, a butcher, and ſtig-"matized, and of a whore, my father married in the "loweſt of his fortune, who both of them were chaſti-"zed for ſome miſdemeanour. An orator bought me, "when a child, and finding me a pretty and a forward "boy, bred me up, and when he died left me all his e-"ſtate, which I have brought into this city of Athens, "and here ſettled myſelf to the ſtudy of philoſophy. Let the hiſtorians never trouble themſelves with inquiring after me. I ſhall tell them what I am; and a free and generous confeſſion enervates reproach, and diſarms ſlander. So it is, that all things conſidered, I fancy men as oft commend, as undervalue me beyond reaſon. And methinks alſo, from my infancy, they have given me a place, in rank and degree of honour, rather above than below my right. I ſhould find myſelf more at eaſe in a country where theſe degrees were either regulated or not regarded. Amongſt men, when the difference about the precedency either of walking or ſitting exceeds three replies, 'tis reputed uncivil. I never ſtick at giving, or taking place out of rule, to avoid the trouble of ceremony. And never denied precedency to any man who affected it. Beſides this profit I reap from writing of myſelf, I have alſo hoped for this other advantage, that if it ſhould fall out that my humour ſhould pleaſe or jump, with thoſe of ſome honeſt man,

* Not Dion as it is in all the editions of Montaigne, as well as Mr. Cotton's tranſlation. † Diogenes Laertius in the Life of Bion, lib. iv. ſect. 46.

man, before I die, he would then deſire, and ſeek to be acquainted with me. I have given him a great deal of ſpace; for all that he could have in many years acquired by a long acquaintance and familiarity, he has ſeen in three days in this regiſter, and more ſurely and exactly ſet down. A pleaſant fancy: many things that I would not confeſs to any one in particular, I deliver to the publick; and refer my beſt friends to a bookſeller's, ſhop to know what are my moſt ſecret attainments and thoughts.

Excutienda damus præcordia *.

Fain would the muſe lay open to thy teſt,
Each latent thought, each winding of my breaſt.

Had I by ſuch plain tokens known where to have ſought for any one proper for my converſation, I ſhould certainly have gone a great way to find him: For the ſweetneſs of ſuitable and agreeable company, cannot, in my opinion, be bought too dear. Oh! What a rare thing is a friend! How true is that old ſaying, "That the uſe of a friend is more pleaſing and neceſ-"ſary than the elements of water and fire!" to return to my ſubject; there is then no great harm in dying privately, and far from home. And we think it a duty to retire for natural actions not ſo diſagreeable nor terrible as this. But moreover, ſuch as are reduced to ſpin out a long languiſhing life, ought not perhaps to wiſh to incumber a great family with their continual miſeries. Therefore the Indians, in a certain province, thought it juſt to diſpatch a man, when reduced to ſuch a neceſſity: And in another of their provinces they all forſook him, to ſhift for himſelf as well as he could. To whom do they not at leaſt become irkſome, tedious and inſupportable? you teach your beſt friends to be cruel in ſpite of them; hardening women and children by long uſage, neither to lament, nor to regard your ſufferings. The groans extorted from me by the ſtone, are not now regarded by any-body. And though we ſhould extract ſome pleaſure from their converſation, (which does not always happen, by reaſon of the diſparity of conditions, which eaſily begets contempt or envy toward any one whatever) is it not too much to be troubleſome all the days

* Perſ. Sat. 5. v. 22.

days of a man's life? the more I ſhould ſee them ſtrain out of real affection to be ſerviceable to me, the more I ſhould be ſorry for their pains. We are allowed to lean, but not to lay our whole weight upon others, ſo as to prop ourſelves by their ruin. Like him who cauſed little childrens throats to be cut, to make uſe of their blood for the cure of a certain diſeaſe he had: or that other, who was continually ſupplied with tender young girls, to keep his old limbs warm in the night, and to mix the ſweetneſs of theirs with his ſour and ſtinking breath. Decrepit old age is a ſolitary quality. I am ſociable even to exceſs; yet I think it reaſonable that I ſhould now withdraw my ailments from the ſight of the world, and keep them to myſelf. Let me ſhrink and draw up myſelf like a tortoiſe. I learn to viſit men without hanging upon them; I ſhould endanger them in ſo ſteep a paſſage. It is now time to turn my back to company.

But in theſe travels you may be ſurprized with ſickneſs in ſome wretched cot or hovel, where nothing can be had to relieve you: I always carry moſt things neceſſary with me; and beſides, we cannot evade fortune, or eſcape fate, if it once reſolve to attack us. I need nothing extraordinary when I am ſick. I will not be beholden to my bolus to do that for me which nature cannot. At the very beginning of my fevers, and ſickneſſes that caſt me down, whilſt I am yet intire, and but little diſorder'd in my health, I reconcile myſelf to God by the laſt chriſtian offices, and find myſelf by ſo doing more free and lithſome, and have got methinks ſo much the better of my diſeaſe. And I have ſtill leſs need of a ſcrivener or counſellor, than of a phyſician. What I have not ſettled of my affairs when I was in health, let no one expect I ſhould do it when I am ſick. Death is what I am ever prepared for. I durſt not ſo much as one day defer it. And if nothing be done, 'tis as much as to ſay, either that doubt delayed my choice, (and ſometimes 'tis well choſen not to chooſe) or that I was poſitively reſolved not to do any thing at all. I write my book for few men, and for few years. Had it been a matter of duration, it ſhould have been put into a more durable language; for according

to

to the continual variation that ours has to this day been ſubject to, who can expect that the preſent ſtile ſhould be in uſe fifty years hence? It ſlips every day through our fingers, and ſince I was born is altered one half. We ſay that it is now perfect; and every age ſays the ſame of the language then ſpoken: but I ſhall hardly truſt to that, ſo long as it varies and changes as it does *. 'Tis for good and uſeful writings to rivet it to them, and its reputation will riſe or fall with the fortune of our ſtate. For which reaſon, I am not afraid to inſert in it ſeveral private articles, which will ſpend their uſe amongſt the men that are now living, and that concern the particular knowledge of ſome who will ſee further into them than every common reader. I will not after all, as I oft hear dead men's memories worried, that men ſhould ſay of me, "He judged and lived ſo and "ſo; he would have done this or that, could he have "ſpoke when he was dying, he would have ſaid ſo or "ſo, and have given this thing or t'other; I knew "him better than any." Now, as much as decency permits, I here diſcover my inclinations and affections; but I do it more willingly and freely by word of mouth, to any one who deſires to be informed. So it is, that in theſe memoirs, if any obſerve he will find, that I have either told, or deſigned to tell all. What I cannot expreſs, I point out with my finger.

Verum animo ſatis hæc veſtigia parva ſagaci
Sunt, per quæ poſſis cognoſcere cætera tute †.

But by theſe foot-ſteps a ſagacious mind
May certainly all other matters find.

I leave nothing to be deſired, or to be gueſſed at concerning me. If people muſt be talking of me, I would have it to be juſtly and truly. I would come again with all

* There are in Montaigne ſo many ſolid thoughts, and ſo agreeably expreſſed, paintings ſo juſt, lively, and natural, that his book will be read and regarded as long as the French language ſhall laſt, how different ſoever be the turn of it from what it had in his time; which, though it be already ſo different, the Eſſays have loſt nothing of their former credit with men of a good taſte, who love ſtudy, and to make an advantage of the diſcoveries to which they are naturally led by ſuch ſtudy. This will be an inexhauſtible ſource from which they will always draw with pleaſure. † Lucret. lib. i. v. 403.

all my heart from the other world to give any one the lie that ſhould report me other than I was though he did it to honour me. I perceive that people repreſent, even living men, quite another thing than what they really are: and had I not ſtoutly defended a friend, whom I have loſt, they would have repreſented him to me in a thouſand contrary ſhapes.

To conclude the account of my frail humours, I do confeſs, that in my travel, I ſeldom come to my quarters, but it runs in my mind whether I could like to be ſick, and die there; I wiſh to be lodged in ſome private part of the houſe, remote from all noiſe, and naſtineſs, not ſmoaky, nor cloſe. I aim to ſooth death by theſe frivolous circumſtances; or to ſay better, to diſcharge myſelf from all other incumbrances, that I may have nothing to do, but to wait for an event which will be enough to weigh me down without any other load. I would have my death ſhare with my life in eaſe and convenience; 'tis a great lump of it, and of importance, and hope it will not now contradict what is paſt. Death has ſome forms that are more eaſy than others, and aſſumes divers qualities, according to every one's fancy. Amongſt the natural deaths, thoſe that proceed from weakneſs and a ſtupor, I think the moſt favourable: Amongſt thoſe that are violent, I dread a precipice worſe than the fall of ruins, that would cruſh me in a moment: and think worſe to be killed by a ſword than to be ſhot: I ſhould rather have choſen to poiſon myſelf with Socrates, than ſtab myſelf with Cato. And though it be the ſame thing, yet my imagination makes as wide a difference as betwixt death and life, to throw myſelf into a fiery furnace, and plunge into the channel of a ſmooth river: ſo idly does our fear more concern itſelf for the means than the effect. It is but a moment, 'tis true, but withal, a moment of ſuch weight, that I would willingly give many days of my life to ſhoot the gulf after my own way. Since every one's imagination renders it more or leſs terrible, and ſince every one has ſome choice amongſt the ſeveral forms of dying, let us try a little further, to find ſome one that is wholly clear from all irkſomeneſs.

Might

Might not one render it even pleasant, as they did * who were companions in death with Antony and Cleopatra; I set aside the severe and exemplary efforts produced by philosophy and religion. But amongst men of low rank, such as a Petronius †, and a Tigillinus at Rome ‖, there have been found men condemned to dispatch themselves, who have as it were lulled death asleep with the delicacy of their preparations; they have made it slip and steal away, even in the height of their accustomed diversions, amongst whores and good fellows. There is not a word of consolation, no mention of making a will, no ambitious affectation of constancy, no talk of their future state, amongst sports, feasts, wit and mirth, table-talk, music, and amorous verses. Is it not possible for us to imitate this resolution after a more decent manner? Since there are deaths that are fit for fools, and fit for the wise, let us find out such as are fit for those who are betwixt both. My imagination suggests to me one that is easy, and since we must die, one that is also to be desired. The Roman tyrants thought they did in a manner give a criminal life, when they gave him the choice of his death. But was not Theophrastus, that philosopher, so delicate, so modest, and so wise, compelled by reason, when he durst repeat this verse translated by Cicero?

Vitam regit fortuna, non sapientia ¶.

Fortune, not wisdom, human life doth sway.

Fortune is assisting to the facility of the progress of my life; having placed it in such a condition, that for the future it can be no advantage nor hindrance to me. 'Tis a condition that I would have accepted at any stage of my life: but now that I am packing up my baggage, and marching off, I am particularly pleased, that in dying I shall neither leave them merry, nor sorry; she has so ordered it by a cunning compensation, that they who may pretend to any considerable advantage by my death, will at the same time sustain a material inconvenience. Death sometimes is more grievous to us, in that

* Plutarch in the life of Mark Anthony, c. 15. † Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. c. 19. ‖ Tacit. Hist. lib. i. c. 71. ¶ Cic. Tusc. lib. v. c. 9.

that it is grievous to others, and intereſts us in their intereſt as much as in our own, and ſometimes more.

In this conveniency of quarters which I deſire, I am for nothing pompous and ſumptuous, I hate it rather; but am for a certain plain neatneſs, which is often found in places where there is leſs of art, and which nature has adorned with ſome grace that is altogether her own. "Non ampliter, ſed munditer convivium. "Plus ſalis quam ſumptus *. i. e. I love a feaſt that is 'elegant rather than abundant, in which there is more 'ſavor than ſuperfluity. As for thoſe whoſe affairs compel them to travel in the winter-ſeaſon through the Griſons country, they muſt expect to be reduced to extremity upon the road. I, who for the moſt part travel for my pleaſure, do not order my affairs ſo ill. If the way be foul on my right-hand, I turn on my left; if I find myſelf unfit to ride, I ſtay where I am: and really when I do ſo, I ſee nothing that is not as pleaſant and commodious as my own houſe. 'Tis true, that I always think ſuperfluity ſuperfluous, and obſerve a kind of trouble even in delicacy and abundance. Have I left any thing behind me unſeen, I go back to ſee it; I am never out of my way. I trace no certain line, either ſtraight or crooked, If I do not find in the place to which I go what was reported to me, as it oft falls out that the judgments of others do not jump with mine, and that I have found them for the moſt part wrong; I never complain of loſing my labour: I have at leaſt informed myſelf that what they told me was not there. I have a conſtitution of body as free, and a palate as indifferent as any man living.

The different faſhions of ſeveral nations no further concern me than the mere pleaſure of variety. Every uſage has its reaſon. Be the plate and diſhes, pewter, wood, or earth, my meat boiled or roaſted, let them give me butter or oil, nuts, or olives, hot, or cold, 'tis all one to me: and 'tis ſo indifferent, that growing old, I accuſe this generous faculty, and have need that delicacy and choice ſhould correct the indiſcretion of my appetite, and ſometimes relieve my ſtomach. When I have been abroad out of France, and the people in

* Cor. Nep. in vita Pomp. Attic. c. 13.

civility have aſked me, if I would be ſerved after the French manner, I laughed at the queſtion, and always frequented tables the moſt filled with ſtrangers. I am aſhamed to ſee my countrymen beſotted with this fooliſh humour of quarrelling with forms contrary to their own. They ſeem to be out of their element, when out of their own village. Wherever they go, they keep ſtrictly to their own faſhions, and abominate thoſe of foreigners. If they meet with one of their own country in Hungary; they hail the happy day. They renew their acquaintance; they cling together, and rail at the barbarous manners they ſee there. And why not barbarous, ſince they are not French? and thoſe are reckoned to have made the beſt uſe of their travels, who rail moſt at what they have ſeen; and indeed moſt of them return no wiſer than they went. In their travels very cloſe and reſerved, with a ſilent and incommunicable prudence, preſerving themſelves from the contagion of an unknown air. What I am ſaying of them, puts me in mind of ſomething like it, which I have ſometimes obſerved in ſome of our young courtiers, who will not mix with any but thoſe of their own claſs; and look upon us as men of another world, with diſdain or pity. Put them upon any diſcourſe but the intrigues of the court, and they are utterly at a loſs; as very blockheads and novices to us, as we are to them. And 'tis truly ſaid, that a well-bred man is of a compound education. I, on the contrary, travel very much ſated with our own faſhions; not to look for Gaſcons in Sicily, I have left enough of them at home: I rather ſeek for Greeks and Perſians; they are the men I want to be acquainted with, and the men I ſtudy; 'tis with them that I beſtow and employ myſelf: And, which is more, I fancy that I have met but with few cuſtoms that are not as good as our own. I have not, I confeſs, travelled very far; ſcarce out of the ſight of the ſanes of my own houſe!

As to the reſt, moſt of the accidental company a man falls into upon the road, give him more trouble than pleaſure; I wave them as much as I civilly can, eſpecially now that age ſeems in ſome ſort to privilege and ſequeſter me from the common forms. You ſuffer for others, or others ſuffer for you; both of them inconveniencies

inconveniencies of importance enough, but the latter appears to me the greater.

'Tis a rare fortune, but of ineſtimable ſolace, to have a worthy man, one of a ſound judgment, and of a temper conformable to your own, who takes a delight to bear you company. I have been at a very great loſs for one in all my travels. But ſuch a companion ſhould be choſe, and taken with you from your firſt ſetting out. There can be no pleaſure to me without communication: There is not ſo much as a ſpritely thought comes into my mind, which it does not grieve me to have produced alone, without one to communicate it to. " Si cum " hac exceptione detur ſapientia, ut illam incluſam te- " neam, nec enunciem, rejiciam *." ' If wiſdom were ' conferred on this condition, that I muſt keep it to ' myſelf, and not communicate it to others, ' I would ' refuſe it.' This other has ſtrained it one note higher: " Si contigerit ea vita ſapienti, ut omnium rerum afflu- " entibus copiis, quamvis omnia, quæ cognitione digna " ſunt, ſummo otio ſecum ipſe conſideret, & contemple- " tur, tamen ſi ſolitudo tanta ſit, ut hominem videre non " poſſit, excedat é vita †." ' If ſuch a condition of ' life ſhould happen to a wiſe man, that in the greateſt ' plenty of all conveniencies, he might at the moſt un- ' diſturbed leiſure, conſider and contemplate all things ' worth the knowing, yet if his ſolitude muſt be ſuch that ' he muſt not ſee a man, he had much better quit life ‖.' I approve of Architas's opinion, when he ſaid, that it would be unpleaſant, even in heaven itſelf, to ſurvey the glory of thoſe great and divine celeſtial bodies without a companion. But yet it is much better to be alone, than in fooliſh and troubleſome company. Ariſtippus loved to live as a ſtranger in all places:

Mea ſi fata meis paterentur ducere vitam
Auſpiciis ¶.

But if the fates would ſo propitious be,
To let me live at my own liberty.

I ſhould chuſe to paſs away the greateſt part of my life on horſe-back.

* Seneca, Epiſt. 6. † Cicero de offic. lib. i. c. 43.
‖ Cicero de amicitia, c. 23. ¶ Æneid. lib. iv. v. 340.

——— *visere gestiens,*
Qua parte debacchentur ignes
Qua nebulæ pluviique rores *.

To view the stores of snow and hail,
And where excessive heats prevail.

'But it may be asked, have you not more easy diversions at home? what do you there want? is not your house situated in a sweet and healthful air, sufficiently furnished, and more than sufficiently large? the royal majesty has more than once been entertained there with all his pomp. Are there not more below your family in good government, than there are above it in eminence? is there any local thought which is extraordinary, and indigestible, that afflicts you?

Quæ te nunc coquat, & vexet sub pectora fixa †?

That now lies broiling in thy troubled breast,
And ne'er will suffer thee to be at rest?

'Where do you think to live without molestation and disturbance? "Nunquam simpliciter fortuna indulget ‖." 'The favours of fortune are always mixed with some gall. You see then, it is only you that trouble yourself, and that you every-where follow yourself, and every-where complain; for there is no satisfaction here below, but for souls that are either brutish or divine. He, who in so just an occasion has no contentment, where will he think to find it? how many millions of men would be content to be in such a condition as yours? do but reform yourself; for that is wholly in your own power; whereas you have no other right, but patience towards fortune. "Nulla "placida quies est, nisi quam ratio composuit ¶. i. e." 'There is no perfect tranquillity but what is produced by reason.

I see the reason of this remonstrance, and I see it perfectly well; but it would have been more laconic, and more pertinent, to bid me in one word, Be wise. This resolution is beyond wisdom, 'tis her work and product. Thus the physician lies preaching to a poor languishing patient to be chearful, but he would advise him a little more discreetly in bidding him be well. For my part, I am

* Horat. lib. iii. Ode 3. v. 54. &c. † Cic. de Senect. ex Enn. ‖ Curtius lib. iv. c. 14. ¶ Seneca. epist. 56.

I am but a man of the common ſort. 'Tis a wholeſome precept, certain, and eaſy to be underſtood, 'Be 'content with what you have,' that is to ſay, with reaſon: and yet to follow this advice, is no more in the power of the wiſeſt men than in mine. 'Tis a common ſaying, but of a terrible extent: what does it not comprehend? all things fall under diſcretion and qualification. I know very well, that in the literal ſenſe, ths pleaſure of travelling is a teſtimony of uneaſineſs and irreſolution; therefore theſe two are our governing and predominating qualities. Yes, I do confeſs they are: I ſee nothing, not ſo much as in a dream, and in a wiſh, whereon I could ſet up my reſt: variety only, and the poſſeſſion of diverſity, can ſatisfy me, if any thing can. In travelling, it pleaſes me that I may ſtay where I like without inconvenience, and that I have wherewithal commodiouſly to divert myſelf. I love a private life, becauſe 'tis my own choice that I love it, not from any diſlike of the public way of living, which peradventure is as much according to my complexion. I ſerve my prince by it more chearfully, becauſe it is by the free reflection of my own judgment and reaſon, without any particular obligation; and that I am not compelled ſo to do, for being rejected or diſliked by the other party; and ſo of all the reſt. I hate the morſels that neceſſity carves for me. I ſhould think that any convenience upon which I were only to depend, would ſtick in my throat:

Alter remus aquas, alter mihi radat arenas *.

Let me in water plunge one oar,
And with the other rake the ſhore.

One cord will never hold me faſt enough. You will ſay there is vanity in ſuch an amuſement. But where is there not? and theſe fine precepts are vanity, and all wiſdom is vanity. "Dominus novit cogitationes ſapi-"entium, quoniam vanæ ſunt." 'The Lord know-'eth the thoughts of the wiſe that they are vain †." Theſe exquiſite ſubtilties are only fit for the pulpit. They are diſcourſes that will ſend us all ſadled into the other world. Life is a material and corporal motion,

* Prop. lib. iii. Eleg. 3. v. 23. † Pſalm xciv. v. 11. 1. Corinth. iii. v. 20.

an action imperfect and irregular of its own proper essence; I make it my business to serve it according as it is.

Quisque suos patimur manes *.

We are all punish'd for our proper crimes.

" Sic est faciendum, ut contra naturam universam nihil " contendamus: Ea tamen conservata, propriam sequa- " mur †." ' We must so order it, as by no means to ' contend against universal nature; but yet, that rule ' being observed, to conform to our own.' To what end are these sublime points of philosophy, upon which no human being can settle? and those rules that exceed both our use and force:

I often see that we have ideas of life set before us, which neither the proposer, nor those that hear him, have any manner of hope, nor which is more, of inclination, to follow. Of the same sheet of paper whereon the judge has but just writ a sentence against an adulterer, he steals a piece whereon to write a love-letter to his companion's wife. She with whom you had but just now an illicit commerce, will presently, even in your own hearing, exclaim more loudly against the same fault in her companion, than a Portia. And such there are, who will condemn men to death for crimes, that they do not themselves repute so much as faults. I have in my youth seen a gentleman with one hand present the people with verses that excelled both in wit and debauchery, and with the other, at the same time, the most quarrelsome theological reformation that the world has been teazed with these many years. Men proceed at this rate; we let the laws and precepts take their course; ourselves keep another; not only by debauchery of manners, but often by judgment and contrary opinion. Do but hear a philosophical lecture; the invention, eloquence, and pertinency immediately strike upon your mind, and move you; there is nothing that either pricks or stings your conscience; 'tis not to it that they address. Is not this true? this made Aristo say, that neither a bath nor a lecture signified any thing unless they scowred and made men clean ‖. One may stop at the outward skin;

* Æneid. vi. v. 743. † Cicero de offic. lib. i. c. 31.
‖ Plutarch in his treatise of Hearing, c. 8.

ſkin; but 'tis after the marrow is pikt out: as after having quaſt off the good liquor in a fine bowl, we conſider the graving and workmanſhip. In all the ſchools of antient philoſophy this is to be found, that the ſame philoſophy-reader there publiſhes the rules of temperance, and at the ſame time reads lectures of love and wantonneſs. And Xenophon, even in the boſom of Clinias, writ againſt the Ariſtippick virtue, 'tis not that there is any miraculous converſion in it that makes them thus wavering, but 'tis as Solon repreſents himſelf, ſometimes in his own perſon, and ſometimes in that of a legiſlator. One while he ſpeaks for the crowd, and another for himſelf; taking the free and natural rules for his own ſhare, aſſuring himſelf of intire health and vigour.

Curentur dubii medicis majoribus ægri *.

A deſp'rate wound muſt ſkilful hands employ.

Antiſthenes allowed a wiſe man to be in love †, and do whatever he ſaw opportune, without regard to the laws; foraſmuch as he was better adviſed than they, and had a greater knowledge of virtue ‖. His diſciple Diogenes ſaid, that men to perturbations were to oppoſe reaſon, to fortune confidence, and to the laws nature. For tender ſtomachs, forced and artificial recipes muſt be preſcribed: ſtrong ſtomachs ſerve themſelves ſimply with the preſcriptions of their own natural appetite. After this manner do our phyſicians proceed, who eat melons, and drink iced wines, whilſt they confine their patients to ſyrup and panada. I know not, ſaid the courtezan Lais, what they mean by their books, their wiſdom and philoſophy, but thoſe men knock as oft at my door as any other. In as much as our licentiouſneſs always carries us beyond what is lawful and allowed, men have often ſtretched the precepts and rules of life beyond the univerſal reaſon.

Nemo ſatis credit tantum delinquere quantum
Permittas ¶.

The wretched ſinner always is in queſt
Of crimes unpractis'd, pleaſures unpoſſeſs'd.

It were to be wiſhed, that there were more proportion

* Juven Sat. 13. v. 124. † Diog. Laert. in the life of Antiſthenes, lib. vi. Sect. 11. ‖ Idem, in the life of Diogenes, lib. vi. Sect. 38. ¶ Juven. Sat. 14. v. 233.

on betwixt the command and the obedience, and the mark ſeems to be unjuſt to which one cannot attain. there is no man ſo good, but if he meaſure all his thoughts and actions by the laws, he will find he has deſerved hanging ten times in his life; and at the ſame time it might be great pity and very unjuſt to puniſh and ruin him.

——*Olle, quid ad te*
De cute quid faciat ille vel illa ſua † ?
Ollus, what matters it to thee
What with their ſkin does he or ſhe?

And ſuch a one there may be, as has no way offended the laws, who nevertheleſs would not deſerve the character of a virtuous man, and whom philoſophy would juſtly condemn to be whipt; ſo unequal and perplexed is this relation. We are ſo far from being good men, according to the laws of God, that we cannot be ſo according to our own. Human wiſdom could never yet arrive at the duties it had preſcribed to itſelf; and could it arrive thereto, it would preſcribe itſelf others beyond it, to which it would ever aſpire and pretend: ſo great an enemy to conſiſtency is our human condition. Man enjoins himſelf to be neceſſarily in fault. He is not very diſcreet to cut out his own duty by the meaſure of any other being than his own. To whom does he preſcribe that which he does not expect any one can perform? Is he unjuſt in not doing what is impoſſible for him to do? the laws, by whoſe ſentence we are not able, condemn us for not being able.

At the worſt this diſagreeable liberty of preſenting themſelves two ſeveral ways, the actions after one manner, and the diſcourſes after another way, may be allowed to thoſe who ſpeak of things; but it cannot be allowed to thoſe who ſpeak themſelves, as I do. I muſt march my pen as I do my feet: The common life ought to have a relation to other lives. The virtue of Cato was vigorous beyond the reaſon of the age he lived in, and for a man who undertook to govern others, as being devoted to the public ſervice, this might be called a juſtice, if not unjuſt, at leaſt vain, and out of ſeaſon. Even my own manners, which differ ſcarce an inch

† Mart. lib. vii. Ep. 9. v. 1, 2.

inch from thoſe that are current amongſt us, do yet render me at my age a little rough and unſociable. I know not whether it be without reaſon that I am diſguſted with the company I frequent, but I know very well that it would be without reaſon, ſhould I complain of its being diſguſted with me, ſeeing I am ſo with it. The virtue that is aſſigned to the affairs of the world, is a virtue of too many wavings, corners, and elbows, to join and adapt itſelf to human frailty; a virtue mixed and artificial; not ſtrait, clean, conſtant, nor purely innocent. Our annals to this very day reproach one of our kings for ſuffering himſelf ſimply to be carried away by the conſcientious perſuaſions of his confeſſor. Affairs of ſtate have bolder precepts.

exeat Aulâ,
Qui vult eſſe pius *.

Let him who will be good from court retire.

I have formerly tried to employ in the management of public affairs, opinions, and rules of living, as rude, new, unpoliſhed, or unpolluted, as either were born with me, or I was formed to from my education, and wherewith I ſerve my own turn, if not ſo commodiouſly, at leaſt as ſecurely, in my own particular concerns; but I have found a ſcholaſtic and novice virtue, fooliſh and dangerous. He that goes in a crowd, muſt now go one way, and then another, keep his elbows cloſe, retire, or advance, and quit the direct way, according to what he encounters; and muſt live not ſo much according to his own method, as that of others; not according to what he purpoſes to himſelf, but according to what is propoſed to him, according to the time, according to men, according to occaſions. Plato ſays, that whoever eſcapes unhurt from the world's handling, eſcapes by miracle: and he ſays withal, that when he appoints his philoſopher to be the head of a government, he does not mean a corrupt one like that of Athens, and much leſs ſuch a one as this of ours, wherein wiſdom itſelf would be at a loſs. And a good herb tranſplanted into a ſtrong ſoil very contrary to its own nature, much ſooner conforms itſelf to the ſoil, than it reforms the ſoil to it. I find, that if I were wholly to

* Lucan, lib. viii. v. 493.

to form myself to such employments, I must undergo a great deal of change and new modelling. And though I could so far prevail upon myself, (and why might I not with time and diligence work such a feat) I would not do it. By the little tryal I have had of public employment, it has been so much disgust to me; I feel by times some temptations toward ambition rising in my soul, but I obstinately oppose them.

At tu, Catulle, obstinatus obdura *.

But thou, Catullus, hold out to the last.

I am seldom called to it, and as seldom offer myself uncalled. Liberty and laziness, the qualities most predominant in me, are qualities diametrically contrary to public employment. We cannot distinguish the faculties of men. They have divisions and limits hard and delicate to choose. To conclude from the discreet conduct of a private life, a capacity for the management of public affairs, is to conclude wrong. A man may govern himself well, that cannot govern others so, and compose essays that could not work effects. One man may order a siege well, that cannot marshal a battle, and another may speak well in private, who would not be able to harangue a people, or a prince. Nay, 'tis peradventure rather a testimony in him who can do the one, that he cannot do the other, than otherwise. I find that elevated souls are not much more proper for low things than mean souls are for high ones. Could it be imagined that Socrates should have administer'd occasion of laughter to the Athenians at the expence of his own reputation, for having never been able to sum up the votes of his tribe, to deliver it to the council? doubtless, the veneration I have for the perfections of this great man, deserves that his fortune should furnish so magnificent an example for the excuse of my principal imperfections. Our sufficiency is cut out into small parcels, mine has no latitude, and is also very contemptible in number. Saturninus † said, to those who had conferred upon him the command in chief, 'My fel-

'low

* Catul. Epig. 9. v. 19. † One of the thirty tyrants who rose in the time of the emperor Galian.

‘ low ſoldiers you have loſt a good captain, to make ‘ him a bad general * of an army.

Whoever boaſts, in ſo ſick a time as this, to employ a true and ſincere virtue in the world's ſervice, either he knows not what it is, opinions growing corrupt with manners, (and in truth to hear them deſcribe it, to hear how moſt of 'em boaſt of their deportment, and to ſee what rules they lay down; inſtead of painting virtue, they paint mere vice and injuſtice altogether, and repreſent them in this falſe light in the education of princes) or if he does know it, boaſts unjuſtly; and, let him ſay what he will, does a thouſand things of which his own conſcience accuſes him. I ſhould willingly take Seneca's word, of the experience he made of it upon the like occaſion, provided he would deal frankly with me. The moſt honourable mark of goodneſs in ſuch a neceſſity, is for a man freely to confeſs both his own fault, and thoſe of others; with the power of his virtue to ſtop his inclination toward evil, unwillingly to follow this bias, to hope better, and to deſire better. I perceive that in theſe diſmemberments and diviſions wherein we are involved in France, every one ſtrives to defend his cauſe; even the beſt of 'em with diſſimulation and lyes. He that would write roundly of the true ſtate of the quarrel, would write raſhly and viciouſly. What is the moſt juſt party, other than a member of a canker'd and worm eaten body? but of ſuch a body, the member that is leaſt affected, is ſaid to be ſound, and with good reaſon, foraſmuch as our qualities have no title but in compariſon. The civil innocency is meaſured according to times and places. I ſhould like to read in Xenophon ſuch a commendation of Ageſilaus; being intreated by a neighbouring prince with whom he formerly had war, to permit him to paſs through his country; he granted his requeſt, giving him free paſſage through the Peloponneſus, and not only did not impriſon or poiſon him, when he had him at his mercy, but courteouſly received him according to the obligation of his promiſe, without doing him the leaſt injury. To ſuch humours as thoſe, this was an act of no great luſtre; elſewhere, and in another

* Trebellii Pollionis triginta tyranni, p. 126. Hiſt. Auguſt.

another age, the frankneſs and magnanimity of ſuch an action will be in high eſteem, our raſcally capets * would have laughed at it; ſo little does the Spartan innocence reſemble that of France. We are not without virtuous men, but they are according to what we repute ſo. Whoever has his manners eſtabliſhed in a regularity above the ſtandard of the age he lives in, let him either wreſt and blunt his rules; or, which I would rather adviſe him to, let him retire, and not meddle with us at all. What would he get by it.

Egregium ſanctumque virum ſi cerno, bimembri
Hoc monſtrum puero, & miranti jam ſub aratro
Piſcibus inventis & fœtæ comparo mulæ †.

To me an honeſt man more monſter ſeems
Than nature ſhews ev'n when a woman teems
A child with two heads; than mules foaling found,
Or wond'rous fiſhes plow'd out from the ground.

A man may regret that times are no better, but not fly from the preſent; we may wiſh for other magiſtrates but, we muſt notwithſtanding obey thoſe we have; and peradventure 'tis more laudable to obey the bad than the good. So long as the image of the antient and received laws of this monarchy ſhall ſhine in any corner of the kingdom, there will I pitch my tent. If they unfor-

* Theſe Capets are properly the ſcholars of Montague-College at Paris. In 1480 John Standoncht of Mechlin, a doctor of the Sorbonne, ſettled a fund for maintaining in this college 24 ſcholars, in honour of the 12 apoſtles, and the 72 diſciples of Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe ſcholars were called ſo from ſhort cloaks they wore, called Capes. And as they were treated very harſhly, both with regard to their table, and to their diſcipline, they were commonly ſuch low geniuſes, that the word capette was made uſe of to ſignify a ſcholar of the moſt contemptible character, a fool, an impertinent. Montaigne by the term of raſcally Capets intends the bulk of his cotemporaries, who would not have failed to ridicule the frank and generous ſpirit of Ageſilaus. In the ſame predicament may be placed thoſe Flemiſh hiſtorians, who having accuſed Charles V. of imprudence in relying on the good faith of Francis I. when his imperial majeſty paſſed through France in 1540, have thereby ſignified their opinion, that Francis was very weak in ſlipping ſo fair an opportunity of making himſelf maſter of his moſt formidable enemy. The whole of this note was furniſhed me by M. de la Monnoye.

† Juven. Sat. 13. v. 64. &c.

unfortunately happen to thwart and contradict one another, ſo as to produce two factions of doubtful and difficult choice, I ſhall moſt readily chuſe to eſcape and ſhun the tempeſt. In the mean time nature, or the hazards of war may lend me a hand. Betwixt Cæſar and Pompey, I ſhould frankly have declared myſelf; but amongſt the three robbers * that came after, a man muſt have been neceſſitated either to hide himſelf or have gone along with the current of the time; which I think lawful, when reaſon no longer rules.

Quo diverſus abis †?

Whither doſt thou wand'ring run?

This farrago is a little wide from my ſubject. I go out of my way, but 'tis rather from a wantonneſs than heedleſſneſs. My fancies follow one another, but ſometimes at a great diſtance; and look towards one another, but 'tis with an oblique glance. I have read a dialogue of Plato, of a motly and fantaſtic compoſition beginning with the ſubject of love, and ending with that of rhetoric. They ſtick not at theſe variations, and with a marvellous grace let themſelves be carried away at the pleaſure of the wind; or at leaſt to ſeem as if they were. The titles of my chapters do not always comprehend the ſubject, they oft but denote it by ſome mark only, as thoſe others, Andria, Eunuchus, or theſe, Sylla, Cicero, Torquatus. I love the poetic ramble, by leaps and ſkips; 'tis an art, as Plato ſays, light, nimble, and a little maddiſh. There are pieces in Plutarch, where he forgets his theme, where the propoſition of his argument is only found by incidence; and ſtuft throughout with foreign matter. Do but obſerve his progreſs in the Dæmon of Socrates. Good God! how beautiful then are his variations and frolickſom ſallies, and then moſt of all, when they ſeem to be fortuitous, and introduced for want of heed? 'Tis the unattentive reader that loſes my ſubject, and not I; there will always be found ſome phraſe or other in a corner that is to the purpoſe, though it lie very cloſe.

* Octavius, Mark Antony and Lepidus. † Æneid. lib. v. v. 166.

I ramble indiſcreetly and tumultuouſly, my ſtile and my wit wander at the ſame rate; a little folly is tolerable in him that will not be guilty of too much, ſay the precepts, and much more the examples of our maſters. A thouſand poets flag and creep in the proſaic ſtile, but the beſt old proſe, (and I ſtrow it here up and down indifferently for verſe) ſhines throughout, and has the luſtre, vigour and boldneſs of poetry, not without ſome air of its frenzy; and certainly proſe ought to have the pre-eminence in ſpeaking. The poet, ſays Plato, when ſet upon the Muſes tripod, pours out with fury whatever comes into his mouth, like the ſpout of a fountain, without conſidering and pauſing upon it; and things come from him of various colours, of a contrary ſubſtance, and with an uninterrupted torrent; and all the old theology, (as the learned inform us) as well as the firſt philoſophy, are poeſy. 'Tis the original language of the gods; I mean, that the matter ſhould diſtinguiſh itſelf; it ſufficiently ſhews where it changes, where it concludes, where it begins, and where it rejoins, without interlacing it with words of connexion, introduced for the ſervice of dull or inattentive ears, and without commenting on myſelf. Who is there that had not rather not be read at all, than after a drowſy or curſory manner? "Nihil eſt "tam utile, quod in tranſitu proſit *." 'No work can 'be profitable, when 'tis read curſorily.' If to take a book in hand, were to learn it; if to look upon it, were to conſider it; and to run it ſlightly over, were to make it a man's own; I were then to blame to make myſelf altogether ſo ignorant as I ſay I am. Seeing I cannot fix the attention of my reader by the weight of what I write, "Manco male," 'I am much miſtaken,' if I ſhould chance to do it by perplexing him; nay, he will afterwards repent that he ever amuſed himſelf with it: 'Tis very true, but he will yet amuſe himſelf with it. And beſides, there are ſome humours in which intelligence produces diſdain: who will think better of me for their not underſtanding what I ſay, and will conclude the depth of my ſenſe by it's obſcurity; which to

* Seneca, Epiſt. 2.

to ſpeak ſincerely, I mortally hate, and would avoid, if I knew how. Ariſtotle boaſts ſomewhere in his writings, that he affected it: vicious affectation! The frequent breaks in chapters that I choſe to make in the beginning of my book, I have ſince thought, broke and diſſolved the attention before it was raiſed, as making it diſdain to ſettle and recollect itſelf to ſo little; and upon that account I have made the reſt longer, ſuch as require propoſitions, and aſſigned leiſure. In ſuch an employment, to whom you will not give an hour, you give nothing; and do nothing for him, for whom you only do whilſt you are doing ſomething elſe. To which may be added, that I have peradventure ſome particular obligation to ſpeak only by halves, confuſedly and inconſiſtently. I am therefore diſpleaſed with this impertinent way of talking, theſe extravagant projects that trouble life, and thoſe opinions ſo refin'd, that though they have truth, I think it too dear bought, and too diſagreeable. On the contrary, I make it my buſineſs to bring vanity itſelf in repute, and folly too, if it bring me any pleaſure; and chuſe to follow my own natural inclinations, without bearing too ſtrict a hand upon them.

I have ſeen elſewhere palaces in rubbiſh, and ſtatues both of gods and men defaced, and yet there are men ſtill; all this is true, and yet for all that, I cannot ſo often review the ruins of that ſo great and ſo powerful city, that I do not admire and reverence it. The care of the dead is recommended to us; beſides I have been bred up from my infancy with theſe people: I had knowledge of the affairs of Rome long before I knew thoſe of my own houſe. I knew the Capitol, and its platform, before I knew the Louvre; and the river Tiber, before the river Seine. The qualities and fortunes of Lucullus, Metellus, and Scipio, have ever run more in my head than thoſe of any of my own countrymen. They are all dead, and ſo is my father as abſolutely dead as they, and is removed as far from me and life in eighteen years, as they are in ſixteen hundred; whoſe memory, friendſhip and ſociety, I do nevertheleſs cheriſh and embrace with a very perfect and lively union. Nay, my humour is to render myſelf more offi-

cious to the dead; they no longer help themselves, and therefore methinks they more require my assistance: 'tis there that gratitude appears in its due lustre. Benefits are not so generously placed where there is retrogradation and reflection. Arcesilaus * going to visit Ctesibius who was sick, and finding him in a very poor condition, privately conveyed some money under his pillow; and, by concealing it from him, acquitted him moreover from the acknowledgment due to such a benefit. Such as have merited from me my friendship and gratitude, have never lost them by being no more; I have better and more carefully paid them, when they were gone, and ignorant of what I did. I speak most affectionately of my friends when 'tis no longer in their power to know it. I have had a hundred quarrels in defending Pompey, and for the cause of Brutus. This acquaintance does not continue betwixt us. We have no other hold even of things present but by fancy. Finding myself of no use to this age, I throw myself back upon that other; and am so enamoured of it, that the free, just, and flourishing estate of that antient Rome (for I neither like it in its birth, nor in its old age) engross my affection to a degree of passion; and therefore I cannot so often review the situation of their streets and houses, and those ruins as profound as the antipodes, but they always amaze me. Is it by nature, or through error of fancy, that the sight of places which we know have been frequented and inhabited by persons whose memories are recommended in story, does, in some sort, work more upon us than to hear a recital of their actions, or to read their writings? "Tanta vis admonitionis inest in locis. Et id quidem "in hac urbe infinitum: quacumque enim ingredimur, "in aliquam historiam vestigium ponimus †." 'So 'great a power of admonition is there in places; and 'truly in this city so infinite, that which way soever 'we go we tread upon some history.' It pleases me to consider their face, port, and vestments. I still ruminate on those great names, and make them ring in my

* Diogenes Laert. in the life of Arcesilaus, lib. iv. sec. 37.
† Cic. de fin. lib. v. c. 2.

my ears. " Ego illos veneror, & tantis nominibus " ſemper aſſurgo *." ' I reverence them, and riſe up ' in honour of names ſo great.' Of things that are in any meaſure great and admirable, I admire even the common parts. I could wiſh to ſee them talk, walk, and ſup. It were ingratitude to contemn the relicks and images of ſo many worthy and valiant men as I have ſeen live and die, and who, by their example, give us ſo many good inſtructions, if we knew how to follow them.

And moreover, this very Rome that we now ſee, deſerves to be beloved; ſo long, and by ſo many titles a confederate with our crown; the only common and univerſal city. The ſovereign magiſtrate that commands there, is equally acknowledged elſewhere: 'tis the metropolitan city of all the chriſtian nations. The Spaniſh and French are there at home. To be a prince of this eſtate, there needs no more but to be a prince of Chriſtendom. There is no place upon earth, that heaven has embraced with ſuch an influence and conſtancy of favour; its very ruins are glorious, and ſtately.

Laudandis precioſior ruinis †.

More glorious by her wond'rous ruins.

She yet in her very ruins retains the marks and image of empire. ' Ut palam ſit uno in loco gaudentis opus ' eſſe naturæ.' So that 'tis manifeſt that Nature is in this one place enamoured of her own work. Some would blame, and be angry at themſelves to find themſelves tickled with ſo vain a pleaſure. Our humours are never too vain that are pleaſant. Whatever they are that always content a man of common underſtanding, I could not have the heart to accuſe him.

I am very much obliged to Fortune, in that to this very hour ſhe has offered me no outrage beyond what I was able to bear. Is it not her way to let thoſe live in quiet by whom ſhe is not importuned?

* Seneca, Epiſt. 64. † Sidonius, Apol. Carm. 27. intitled Narbo ad Conſentium, v. 62.

Quanto quiſque ſibi plura negaverit,
A Diis plura feret: nihil cupientium
Nudus caſtra peto: multa petentibus
Deſunt multa *.

The more we to ourſelves deny,
The more the bounteous Gods ſupply,
The more indulgent heav'n beſtows;
Far from the quarters of the great
Happy, tho' naked, I retreat;
Who covet much, their want is great.

If ſhe continue her favour, ſhe will diſmiſs me very well ſatisfied.

——— *nihil ſupra*
Deos laceſſo †.

Not for more
Do I the Gods implore.

But beware a ſhock. There are a thouſand that periſh in the port. I am very eaſy as to what ſhall here happen when I ſhall be gone. Preſent things take up enough of my thoughts.

Fortunæ cætera mando.
I leave the reſt to Fortune.

Beſides, I have not that ſtrong obligation, that which is ſaid to attach men to futurity, by the iſſue that ſucceeds to their name and honour; and peradventure I ought the leſs to covet them, if they are to be ſo much deſired. I am of myſelf but too much tyed to the world, and to this life. I am content to be in Fortune's power by circumſtances properly neceſſary to my being, without otherwiſe extending her juriſdiction over me; and never thought, that to be without children was a defect that ought to render life leſs compleat, and leſs contented. The want of iſſue has its conveniencies too. Children are of the number of things that are not very much to be deſired, eſpecially now, when it would be ſo hard to make them good. 'Bona jam nec naſci licet, ita corrupta ſunt ſemina ‖.' *i. e.* Nor can any

* Hor. lib. iii. Ode 16. v. 21. † Hor. lib. ii. Ode 18. v. 11. 12.
‖ Tertull. de pudicit.

any thing good ſpring from ſeed ſo corrupt. And yet they are juſtly to be lamented by ſuch as loſe them when they have them.

He who left me my houſe in charge, prognoſticated that I ſhould ruin it, conſidering my rambling humour: But he was miſtaken, for I am in the ſame condition now as when I firſt entered into it, or rather better; and yet without office, or any place of profit.

As to the reſt, if Fortune has never done me any violent or extraordinary injury, neither has ſhe favoured me Whatever our family derives from her bounty, was there above an hundred years before my time. I have, as to my own particular, no eſſential and ſolid good, that I ſtand indebted for to her liberality; ſhe has indeed done me ſome airy honours, and titulary favours that are not ſubſtantial; and thoſe in truth ſhe has not granted, but offered me, who, God knows, am all material, and like nothing but what is real and ſolid. And who, if I durſt confeſs ſo much, ſhould not think avarice much leſs excuſable than ambition; nor pain leſs to be avoided than ſhame; nor health leſs to be coveted than learning, or riches than nobility.

Amongſt her empty favours there is none that ſo much pleaſes the ſilly humour natural to my country, as an authentic bull of a Roman burgeſs, that was granted me when I was laſt there, embelliſhed with pompous ſeals and gilt letters; and granted in the moſt bountiful manner. And becauſe 'tis couched in a mixt ſtile, more or leſs favourable, and that I could have been glad to have ſeen the copy of it before it had paſſed the ſeal, I will, to ſatisfy any one that may be ſick of the ſame curioſity. I was, tranſcribe it here in its true form.

Quod Horatius Maximus, Martius Cecius, Alexander Mutus, almæ urbis conſervatores, de Illuſtriſſimo viro, Michaele Montano, equite Sancti Michaelis, & a Cubiculo Regis Chriſtianiſſimi, Romana Civitate donando, ad Senatum retulerunt, S. P. Q. R. *de ea re ita fieri cenſuit.*

CUM veteri more & inſtituto cupide illi ſemper ſtudioſeque ſuſcepti ſint, qui virtute ac nobilitate præſtantes,

præstantes, magno Reip. nostræ usui atque ornamento fuissent, vel esse aliquando possent: Nos majorum nostrorum exemplo, atque auctoritate permoti, præclaram hanc consuetudinem nobis imitandam, ac servandam fore censemus. Quamobrem cum Illustrissimus Michael Montanus Eques Sancti Michaelis, & a Cubiculo Regis Christianissimi, Romani nominis studiosissimus, & familiæ laude, atque splendore, & propriis virtutum meritis dignissimus sit, qui summo Senatus Populique Romani judicio ac studio in Romanam Civitatem adsciscatur; placere Senatui P. Q. R. Illustrissimum Michaelem Montanum rebus omnibus ornatissimum, atque huic inclyto populo charissimum, ipsum posterosque in Romanam Civitatem adscribi, ornarique omnibus & præmiis & honoribus, quibus illi fruuntur, qui Cives Patritiique Romani nati, aut jure optimo facti sunt. In quo censere Senatum P. Q. R. se non tam illi jus Civitatis largiri, quam debitum tribuere, neque magis beneficium dare quam ab ipso accipere, qui hoc Civitatis munere accipiendo, singulari Civitatem ipsam ornamento, atque honore affecerit. Quam quidem S. C. auctoritatem iidem Conservatores per Senatus P. Q. R. scribas in acta referri atque in Capitolii curia servari, privilegiumque hujusmodi fieri, solitoque urbis sigillo communiri curarunt. Anno ab urbe condita CXↃCCCXXXI. Post Christum natum M.D.LXXXI. III. Idus Martii.

Horatius Fuscus Sacri S. P. Q. R. scriba.
Vincent. Marthelus Sacri S. P. Q. R. scriba.

Being before burgeſs of no city at all, I was glad to be created free of the moſt noble city that ever was, or ever will be. If other men would conſider themſelves, as attentively as I do, they would, as I do, diſcover themſelves to be full of vanity and foppery; and rid myſelf of it I cannot without making myſelf away. We are all leavened with it, as well one as another; but they who are ſenſible on't, have the better bargain, and yet I know not whether they have or no.

This opinion, and common cuſtom to obſerve others more than ourſelves, has very much relieved us. 'Tis

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a very diſpleaſing object: We ſee nothing in it but miſery and vanity. Nature, that we may not be dejected with the ſight of our own deformities, has wiſely projected our optic organ outward. We go forward with the current, but to turn back towards ourſelves is a painful motion; thus is the ſea agitated and troubled when the waves are repelled againſt one another. Obſerve, ſays every one, the motion of the heavens; the revolution of public affairs; obſerve the quarrel of ſuch a perſon; feel ſuch a one's pulſe; mind another's laſt will and teſtament; in ſhort, be always looking high or low, or on one ſide, or before or behind you. It was a paradoxical command anciently given us by the god at Delphos: Look into yourſelf, diſcover yourſelf, keep cloſe to yourſelf; call back your mind and will, that elſewhere conſume themſelves into yourſelf; you run out, you waſte yourſelf; collect yourſelf; ſupport yourſelf; men betray you, men ſpoil you, men ſteal you from yourſelf. Doſt not thou ſee that this world keeps all its views confined within, and its eyes open to contemplate itſelf? 'Tis always vanity for thee, both within and without; but 'tis leſs vanity when leſs extended. Excepting thee, (O man) ſaid that god, every thing ſtudies itſelf firſt, and has bounds to its labours and deſires, according to its need. There is nothing ſo empty and neceſſitous as thou who embraceſt the univerſe; thou art the explorator without knowledge, the magiſtrate without juriſdiction; and after all, the fool in the play.

CHAP. V. *Of managing the Will.*

FEW things in compariſon of what commonly affect other men, move, or to ſay better, captivate me: For 'tis but reaſon they ſhould concern a man, provided they do not wholly engroſs him. I am very ſolicitous, both by ſtudy and argument, to enlarge this privilege of inſenſibility, which in me is naturally far advanced, ſo that I eſpouſe, and am conſequently moved with few things. I have a clear ſight; but I fix it upon very few objects; have a ſenſe delicate and tender, but an apprehenſion and application hard and dull; I am very unwilling to engage myſelf. As much

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as in me lies, I employ myſelf wholly for myſelf; and in this very ſubject, ſhould rather chuſe to curb and reſtrain my affection from plunging intirely into it, it being a ſubject that I poſſeſs at the mercy of others, and over which Fortune has more right than I. So that even ſo far as to health, which I ſo much value, it were neceſſary for me, not ſo paſſionately to covet and deſire it, as to think diſeaſes inſupportable. There ought to be a medium betwixt the hatred of pain, and love of pleaſure. And Plato preſcribes the very thing.

But againſt ſuch affections as carry me away from myſelf, and fix me elſewhere, againſt thoſe, I ſay, I oppoſe myſelf with all my force. 'Tis my opinion, that a man ſhould lend himſelf to others, and only give himſelf to himſelf. Were my will eaſy to be engaged and ſwayed, I ſhould not ſtick there: I am too tender both by nature and habit.

——— *Fugax rerum, ſecuraque in otia natus* *.

I fly from buſineſs as from a diſeaſe;
Having been bred in negligence and eaſe,

for hot and obſtinate diſputes wherein my adverſary would at laſt have the better; and the iſſue, which would render my heat of argument diſgraceful, would peradventure vex me to the laſt degree. Should I ſet myſelf to it as earneſtly as others do, my ſoul would never be able to bear the emotion and alarms, which thoſe feel who graſp ſo much, and it would immediately be diſtracted by this inward agitation. If ſometimes I have been put upon the management of other mens affairs, I have promiſed to take them in hand, but not into my lungs and liver; to charge myſelf with them, not to incorporate them: To take pains but not to be paſſionate in them; I have a regard to them, but I will not brood over them: I have enough to do to order and govern the domeſtic throng that I have in my own veins and bowels, without harbouring and loading myſelf with a crowd of other mens affairs, and have enough of my own proper and natural buſineſs to mind,

* Ovid. de Triſt. l. iii. Eleg. 2. v. 9.

mind, without calling in the concerns of others. Such as know how much they owe to themſelves, and how many offices they are bound to of their own, find, that nature has cut them out work enough of their own to keep them from being idle. Thou haſt buſineſs enough at home, look to that. Men let themſelves out to hire; their faculties are not for themſelves, but are employed for thoſe to whom they have enſlaved themſelves; this common humour pleaſes not me. We muſt be thrifty of the liberty of our ſouls, and never let them out but upon juſt occaſions, which, if we judge aright, are very few. Do but obſerve ſuch as have accuſtomed themſelves to be at every one's call and command; they are ſo upon all, as well little as great, occaſions, in what does not concern them, as well as in what does. They intrude themſelves indifferently where-ever there is buſineſs, and are without life, when not in ſome buſtle of affairs. "In negotiis "ſunt negotii cauſa *." *i. e.* 'They only ſeek buſineſs 'for buſineſs ſake.' It is not ſo much that they deſire to go, as it is that they cannot ſtand ſtill; Like a rowling ſtone from a hill, that ſtops not, till 'tis at the bottom. Buſineſs, in a certain ſort of men, is a mark of underſtanding, and dignity. Their minds are not eaſy but in agitation, as children that muſt be rocked in a cradle. They may pronounce themſelves as ſerviceable to their friends, as troubleſome to themſelves. No one is laviſh of his money to another, but every one is ready to give him his time and his life. There is nothing of which we are ſo prodigal as of theſe things, of which to be thrifty, would be both commendable and uſeful. I am of a quite contrary humour. I look to myſelf, and commonly covet with no great ardour what I do deſire, and deſire little: I employ and buſy myſelf likewiſe but rarely and temperately. Whatever they aim at, and take in hand they do it with their utmoſt deſire and with vehemency. There are ſo many wrong ſteps in life, that for the more ſafety, we muſt a little lightly and ſuperficially ſlide through the world, and not plunge into it over head and ears. Pleaſure itſelf is painful at the bottom.

——incedis

* Seneca, Epiſt. 22.

——incedis per ignes
Suppoſitos cineri doloſo *.

Thou upon glowing coals doſt tread,
Under deceitful aſhes hid.

The parliament of Bourdeaux choſe me mayor of their city, at a time when I was far from France, and much farther from any ſuch thought: I intreated to be excuſed; but I was told that I was to blame, the king having moreover interpoſed his command in that affair. 'Tis an office that ought to be looked upon the more honourable, as it has no ſalary nor advantage but the bare honour of its execution: It continues two years, but may be extended by a ſecond election, which very rarely happens; but it did to me, though it never did ſo but twice before: viz. ſome years ago to monſieur de Lanſac, and lately to monſieur de Biron, mareſchal of France, in whoſe place I ſucceeded, and left mine to monſieur de Matignon, mareſchal of France alſo, proud of ſo noble a fraternity.

Uterque bonus pacis bellique miniſter †.

Both of them men of worthy character,
For able miniſters in peace and war.

Fortune would have a hand in my promotion, by this particular circumſtance which ſhe put in of her own, not altogether vain; for Alexander diſdained the ambaſſadors of Corinth, who offered him a burgeſs-ſhip of their city; but when they proceeded to lay before him, that Bacchus and Hercules were alſo in the regiſter, he thankfully accepted it.

At my arrival, I faithfully and conſcientiouſly repreſented myſelf to them for ſuch as I find myſelf to be; a man without memory, without vigilance, without experience, and without vigour; but withal, without hatred, without ambition, without avarice, and without violence; that they might be informed, and know what they were to expect from my ſervice. And becauſe the knowledge they had of my deceaſed father, and the honour in which they held his memory, were their

* Hor. lib. ii. Ode 1. v. 7. † Æneid. lib. xi. v. 658.

their only motives to confer this favour upon me, I plainly told them, that I ſhould be very ſorry any thing ſhould make ſo great an impreſſion upon me as their affairs, and the concerns of their city had done upon him, whilſt he had the care of them in the ſame government to which they had preferred me. I very well remember when I was a boy, to have ſeen him in his old age, cruelly tormented with the toil of the public affairs; forgetting the ſweet calm of his own houſe, to which his age and infirmity had attached him for ſeveral years before; regardleſs of his own affairs, and of his health, and really deſpiſing his own life, which was in great danger of being loſt, by being engaged in long and painful journeys for their ſervice. Such was he, and this humour of his proceeded from great good nature. Never was there a more charitable and public-ſpirited ſoul. Yet this proceeding which I commend in another, I do not love to follow myſelf, and am not without an excuſe. He had learnt, that a man muſt forget himſelf for his neighbour, and that particulars were of no manner of conſideration in compariſon with the general concern.

Moſt of the rules and precepts of this world tend to drive us out of ourſelves to go a hunting for the benefit of the public ſociety. The ſages thought to do a great feat, to divert and ſeparate us from ourſelves, preſuming we were too much attached to ourſelves, and by a too natural inclination, and have left nothing unſaid to that purpoſe: For 'tis no new thing for wiſe men to preach up new things as they ſerve, not as they are. Truth has its obſtructions, inconveniencies, and incompatibilities with us. We muſt be often deceived, that we may not deceive ourſelves. Our eyes muſt be ſhut, and our underſtandings ſtupified to recover and amend them. "Imperiti enim judicant, & qui fre-"quenter in hoc ipſum fallendi ſunt, ne errent." *i. e.* 'For the ignorant judge, and therefore are oft to be 'deceived leſt they ſhould err.' When they preſcribe us to love three, four and fifty degrees of things above ourſelves, they do like archers, who to hit the white, take their aim a great deal higher than the butt. To ſet a crooked ſtick ſtraight, we bend it the contrary

way. I believe that in the temple of Pallas, as we ſee in all other religions, there were apparent myſteries to be expoſed to the people, and others more ſecret and ſublime, that were only to be ſhown to ſuch as were the Profeſſors.

It is likely that the true point of friendſhip that every one owes to himſelf is to be found in theſe things; not a falſe friendſhip, that makes us embrace glory, knowledge, riches, and the like, with a principal and immoderate affection, as members of our being; nor an indiſcreet and effeminate friendſhip, which, like ivy, decays and ruins the walls it does embrace: but a ſound and regular friendſhip, equally profitable and pleaſant. Whoever knows the duties of this friendſhip, and does practiſe them, is truly of the cabinet-council of the muſes, and has attained to the height of human wiſdom, and our happineſs. Such a one, exactly knowing what he owes to himſelf, will on his part find that he ought to apply the uſe of the world, and of other men to himſelf, and for this end to contribute the duties and offices appertaining to him to the public ſociety. He who does not in ſome ſort live for others, does not much live for himſelf. "Qui "ſibi amicus eſt, ſcito hunc amicum omnibus eſſe *." i. e. 'He who is his own friend, is a friend to all 'men.' The principal charge we have, is, to every one to take care of himſelf: and ſit is for this that we here live. As he who ſhould omit to lead a virtuous and holy life, and think he acquitted himſelf of his duty, by inſtructing and training others up to it, would be a fool; even ſo he, who abandons his own healthful and pleaſant life to ſerve others, takes in my opinion a courſe that is wrong, and unnatural.

I would not that men ſhould refuſe, in the employments they take upon them, their attention, pains, their eloquence, and if need be, their ſweat and blood.

non ille pro caris amicis
Aut patria timidus perire †.

He

* Sen. Epiſt. 6. at the end. † Hor. lib. iv. Ode 9. v. 52.

He for his country or his friend,
Is not afraid to die.

But this is by way of loan and accidentally; his mind being always in repoſe and in health; not without action, but without Vexation, without Paſſion. Meerly to act, coſts him ſo little, that he acts even ſleeping. But it muſt be put into briſk motion with diſcretion; for the body receives the offices impoſed upon it, juſt according to what they are; the mind oft extends, and makes them heavier at its own expence, giving them what meaſure it pleaſes. Men perform like things with different efforts, and a different contention of the will; the one does well enough without the other. For how many people hazard themſelves every day in war, without any concern which way it goes, and thruſt themſelves into the dangers of battles, the loſs of which will not break their next night's ſleep? And there are men at home, out of ſuch danger, which they durſt not have faced, who are more paſſionately concerned for the iſſue of this war, and whoſe ſoul is more anxious about the events of it than the ſoldier who ſpends his life and blood in it. I could have engaged myſelf in public employments, without quitting myſelf a hair's breadth, and have given myſelf to others, without abandoning myſelf; this eagerneſs and vehemence of deſires more hinders than advances the conduct of what we undertake; fills us with impatience againſt ſlow or contrary events, and with bitterneſs and ſuſpicion againſt thoſe, with whom we have to do. We never carry on that thing well, by which we are wholly poſſeſſed and governed.

Male cuncta miniſtrat
Impetus *.

For heat does ſtill
Carry on things very ill.

He, who therein employs only his judgment and addreſs, proceeds more chearfully: he counterfeits, he gives way, he defers all things at his eaſe, according to the neceſſities of occaſions; he fails in his attempts

* Statius in Thebais, lib. x. v. 4 and 5.

without trouble and affliction, ready and entire for a new enterprize: He always marches with the bridle in his hand. In him who is intoxicated with this violent and tyrannic intention, we diſcover by neceſſity much imprudence and injuſtice. The impetuoſity of his deſire carries him away. Theſe are raſh motions, and, if fortune do not very much aſſiſt, of very little fruit. Philoſophy requires, that in the puniſhment of injuries received, we ſhould diveſt ourſelves of choler; not that the revenge ſhould be leſs, but, on the contrary, that it may be the better applied and the more heavily laid on, which, it is conceived, will be by this impetuoſity hindered. For anger does not only trouble, but of itſelf does alſo weary the arms of thoſe who chaſtiſe. This fire benumbs and waſtes their ſtrength. As in precipitancy, "Feſtinatio tarda eſt." i. e. 'The 'more haſte, the worſe ſpeed.' Haſte trips up its own heels, fetters and ſtops itſelf, 'Ipſa ſe velocitas impli-'cat *. For example: according to what I commonly ſee, avarice has no greater impediment than itſelf. The more intenſe and vigorous it is, the leſs it rakes together, and commonly ſooner gathers riches when diſguiſed under a maſk of liberality.

A very honeſt gentleman, a friend of mine, had like to have cracked his brains by a too paſſionate attention and affection to the affairs of a certain prince, his maſter; which maſter has thus painted himſelf to me; that he foreſees the weight of accidents as well as another; but that in thoſe for which there is no remedy, he preſently reſolves upon patience. In others, having taken all the neceſſary precautions, which by the vivacity of his underſtanding he can ſoon do, he calmly waits what may follow. And, in truth, I have accordingly ſeen him maintain a great indifferency and freedom of actions, and countenance, in very great and perplexed affairs. I find him a greater, and a more able man in adverſity than proſperity. His loſſes are to him more glorious than his victories, and his mourning than his triumphs.

Do but conſider, that even in vain and frivolous actions, as at Cheſs, Tennis, and the like, this eager and

* Seneca, epiſt. 44. at the end.

and ardent engaging with an impetuous deſire, immediately throws the mind and members into indiſcretion and diſorder. A man puzzles and bewilders himſelf. He that carries himſelf the moſt moderately both towards gain and loſs, has always his wits about him. The leſs peeviſh and paſſionate he is at play, he plays with much more advantage and ſafety.

As to the reſt, we hinder the mind's graſp and holdfaſt in giving it ſo many things to ſeize upon. Some things we are only to offer to it, to tie it to others, and with others to incorporate it. It can feel and diſcern all things, but ought to feed on nothing but ſelf; and ſhould be inſtructed in what properly concerns itſelf, and what is properly of its own poſſeſſion and ſubſtance: the laws of nature teach us what we are juſtly to have. After the ſages have told us, that no one is indigent by nature, and that every one is ſo according to opinion, they very ſubtilly diſtinguiſh betwixt the deſires that proceed from the former, and thoſe that proceed from the irregularity of our own fancy. Thoſe, of which we can ſee the end, are nature's; thoſe that fly before us, and of which we can ſee no end, are our own. There is an eaſy cure for the want of goods; but the poverty of the ſoul is incurable.

Nam ſi, quod ſatis eſt homini, id ſatis eſſe poteſſet,
Hoc ſat erat: nunc, quam hoc non eſt, qui credimus porro,
Divitias ullas animum mi explere poteſſe?*

If what's for man enough, enough could be,
It were enough; but as we plainly ſee
That won't ſuffice; how can I e'er believe
That any wealth my mind content can give?

Socrates ſeeing a heap of treaſure, jewels, and coſtly furniture, carried in pomp through the city, 'How 'many things †,' ſaid he, 'do I not deſire!' Metrodorus lived on the weight of twelve ounces a day; Epicu-

* Lucilius, lib. v. apud Nunnium. c. 5. ſec. 98.
† Cic. Tuſc. Quæſt. lib. v. c. 32.

rus upon leſs: Metrocles * in winter ſlept abroad amongſt ſheep, in ſummer in the cloyſters of churches. "Sufficit ad id natura quod poſcit ‖." i. e. 'Nature 'furniſhes what it abſolutely needs.' Cleanthes lived by the labour of his own hands, and boaſted, 'That 'Cleanthes, if he would, could yet maintain another 'Cleanthes ¶.'

If that, which nature exactly and originally requires of us for the preſervation of our being, be too little, (as in truth, how much it is, and how cheap life may be maintained, cannot be better made out, than by this conſideration, that it is ſo little, that by its littleneſs it eſcapes the gripe and ſhock of fortune) let us allow ourſelves a little more, let us even call every one of our habits and conditions nature; let us tax and treat ourſelves by this meaſure, let us ſtretch our appurtenances and accompts thus far; for ſo far I fancy we have ſome excuſe. Cuſtom is a ſecond nature, and no leſs powerful. What is wanting to my cuſtom, I reckon as wanting to me; and I ſhould be almoſt as well content that they took away my life, as retrench me in the way wherein I have ſo long lived. I am paſt the terms of any great change, nor able to put myſelf into a new and unwonted courſe, though it were to my advantage; 'tis paſt the time for me to become other than what I am. And as I ſhould complain of any great good adventure that ſhould now befal me, that it came not in time to be enjoyed;

Quo mihi fortunas, ſi non conceditur uti? **

Might I have the world's wealth, I ſhould refuſe it;
What good will't do me, if I may not uſe it?

ſo ſhould I complain of any inward acquiſition. It were almoſt better never, than ſo late, to become honourable; and to know the world thoroughly when a man has no longer to live. I, who am going out of it, would

* Plutarch in his tract, intitled, 'That vice alone is ſufficient to make a man unhappy,' ch. 4.

‖ Seneca, epiſt. 18. ¶ 'Twas Zeno who ſaid this of Cleanthes, his diſciple, if we may believe Diogenes Laertius in the life of Cleanthes, lib. vii. ſec. 169, 170.

** Hor. lib. epiſt 5, 12.

would eaſily reſign to any new comer all the prudence I have acquired in the world's commerce. 'After 'meat comes muſtard.' I have no need of goods, of which I can make no uſe. Of what uſe is knowledge to him that has loſt his head? 'tis an injury and unkindneſs in fortune, to tender us preſents that will inſpire us with a juſt reſentment that we had them not in their ſeaſon. Guide me no more, I can no longer go. Of ſo many parts as make up a ſufficiency, patience is the beſt. Aſſign the part of an excellent treble to a chorifter that has rotten lungs, and eloquence to a hermit exiled into the deſarts of Arabia. There is no art neceſſary for a fall; the end comes of itſelf, at the concluſion of every affair. My world is at an end, my form expired; 'tis all over with me; and I am bound to authoriſe it, and to conform my exit to it. I will here declare, by way of example, that the late ten days diminution of the year by the pope, has taken me ſo low, that I cannot well reconcile myſelf to it. I follow the years wherein we kept another kind of account: ſo antient, and ſo long a cuſtom, challenges and calls me back to it; ſo that I am conſtrained to be a kind of Heretick in that point, impatient of any, though corrective, innovation. My imagination, in ſpite of my teeth, always puſhes me ten days forward or backward, and is ever murmuring in my ears; This rule concerns thoſe who are to begin to be. If health itſelf, as ſweet as it is, returns to me by intervals, 'tis rather to give me cauſe of regret than poſſeſſion of it; I have no longer the means of recovering it. Time leaves me, without which nothing can be poſſeſſed. Oh, what little account ſhould I make of thoſe great elective dignities that I ſee in the world, which are only conferred upon men who are taking leave of it! Wherein it is not ſo much regarded how well he will diſcharge them, as how little a while; from the very entrance they have an eye to the exit. To conclude, I am ready to finiſh this man, and not to rebuild another. By long cuſtom, this form is, in me, turned into ſubſtance, and fortune into nature. I ſay therefore, that every one of us feeble creatures is excuſable in thinking that his own, which is comprized under this mea-

measure; but withal, beyond these limits, 'tis nothing but confusion, it is the largest extent we can grant to our prerogative. The more we amplify our possessions, so much the more do we expose ourselves to the strokes of fortune and adversity. The career of our desires ought to be circumscribed, and restrained to a short limit of near and contiguous conveniencies; and ought moreover to perform their course, not in a right line, that ends elsewhere, but in a circle, of which the two points by a short circumvolution meet and terminate in ourselves. Actions that are carried on without this reflection, a near and essential reflection I mean, such as those of ambitious and avaritious men, and many more, who run from the point, and whose career always carries them before themselves, such actions, I say, are erroneous and crazy.

Most of our business is Farce. 'Mundus universus 'exercet histrioniam *.' We must play our part duly, but withal as the part of a borrowed person; we must not make real essence out of a vizor and outward appearance, nor of a strange person our own; we cannot distinguish things that are near from those that are remote; it is enough to meal the face, without mealing the breast. I see some, who transform and transubstantiate themselves into as many new shapes and new beings as they undertake employments, and who, with the pride of Lucifer, carry their office along with them, even to their close-stool: I cannot make them distinguish the salutations made to them, from those that are made to their commission, their train, or their mule. "Tantum se fortunæ permittunt, etiam ut naturam "dediscant †." i. e. 'They are so intoxicated with 'their fortune, as even to forget their nature. They swell and puff up their souls, and their natural tone of speaking according to the height of their place. The mayor and Montaigne have ever been two persons, by very manifest separation. To be an advocate or a treasurer, a man must not be ignorant of the knavery of such callings; an honest man is not accountable for the vices or folly of his profession, and yet ought not to

* Petronius Arbiter, lib. iii. c. 8.
† Quin. Cur. lib iii. cap. 2.

to refuſe to take it upon him: 'Tis the cuſtom of his country, and there is money to be got by it; a man muſt live by the world, and make his beſt of it, ſuch as it is. But the judgment of an emperor ought to be upon his empire, and the ſeeing and conſidering of it, as of a foreign accident; and he ought to know how to enjoy himſelf apart from it, and to communicate himſelf, as James and Peter, to himſelf at leaſt. I cannot engage myſelf ſo deep and ſo entire.

When my will gives me up to a party, it is not with ſo violent an obligation as to infect my underſtanding. In the preſent broils of this kingdom, my intereſt has not made me forget the qualities of our adverſaries that are laudable, nor thoſe that are reproachable in our party. They adore all of their own ſide; for my part I do not ſo much as excuſe moſt things in mine: a good piece has never the worſe grace for being leveled at me. The knot of the controverſy excepted, I have always kept myſelf in equanimity and pure indifference. "Neque extra neceſſitates belli "præcipuum odium gero." i. e. 'And I have no particu-'lar hatred beyond the neceſſities of war.' For which I am pleaſed with myſelf, and the more, becauſe I ſee common failings on the contrary ſide. Such as extend their anger and hatred beyond the diſpute in queſtion, as moſt men do, ſhow that they ſpring from ſome other motive and particular cauſe; like one, who being cured of an ulcer, has yet a remaining fever, by which it appears that the latter had another ſource more concealed. Thus they are not concerned in the common cauſe, as it is wounding to the intereſt of the ſtate and the public, but are only animated by their private concerns. This is the true reaſon why they are ſo particularly piqued, and to a degree beyond juſtice and public reaſon. "Non tam omnia univerſi, quam ea, "quæ ad quemque pertinent, ſinguli carpebant." i. e. 'Every one was not ſo much angry at things in general, 'as at thoſe that particularly concern themſelves.' I would have matters go well on our ſide; but if they do not, I ſhall not run mad. I am heartily for the right party; but I do not affect to be taken notice of

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in particular for an enemy to the others, and beyond the general reaſon. I am a mortal enemy to this vicious form of cenſure: 'He is of the league, becauſe 'he admires the perſon of the duke of Guiſe. Another is aſtoniſhed at the king of Navarre's activity, and 'therefore he is a Hugonot. Another finds ſuch and 'ſuch faults in the king's conduct, and therefore he is 'ſeditious in his heart.' And would not grant to a magiſtrate himſelf, that he did well in condemning a book, becauſe it had ranked a heretic among the beſt poets of the time. Shall we not dare to ſay of a thief, that he has a handſome leg? If a woman be a ſtrumpet, muſt it needs follow that ſhe has a ſtinking breath? Did they in the wiſeſt ages revoke the ſuperb title of Capitolinus, which they had before conferred upon Marcus Manlius, as the conſervator of religion and the public liberty; did they ſtifle the memory of his liberality, his feats of arms and the military rewards granted to his virtue, becauſe he afterwards aſpired to the ſovereignty, in prejudice of the laws of his country? If they have taken an hatred againſt an advocate, he will not be allowed the next day to be eloquent. I have elſewhere ſpoke of the zeal that puſhed on worthy men to the like faults. For my part, I can ſay, ſuch an one does this thing wickedly, and another thing virtuouſly. In like manner, in the prognoſticks, or ſiniſter events of affairs, they pronounce every one in his party to be blind, or a blockhead, and require our perſuaſion and judgment to be ſubſervient, not to truth, but to the project of our wiſhes. I ſhould rather incline towards the other extreme, ſo much do I fear being ſuborned by my deſire: to which may be added, that I am a little tenderly diſtruſtful of things that I wiſh.

I have in my time ſeen wonders in that indiſcreet and prodigious readineſs of people in ſuffering their hopes and belief to be led and governed which way has beſt pleaſed and ſerved their leaders, through a hundred miſtakes one upon another; and through dreams and phantaſms. I no longer wonder at thoſe who have been ſeduced by the fooleries of Apollonius and Mahomet. Their ſenſe and underſtanding is abſolutely ſtifled in their paſſion; their diſcretion has no more

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any other choice than that which ſmiles upon them, and encourages their cauſe. I had principally obſerved this in the beginning of our inteſtine heats; this other, which is ſprung up ſince, by imitating, has ſurpaſſed it; by which I am induced to think that it is a quality inſeparable from popular errors. After the firſt that ſtarts, opinions drive on one another like waves with the wind. A man is not a member of the body, if it be in his power to forſake it, and if he do not run with the herd; but certainly they wrong the juſt ſide, when they go about to aſſiſt it with fraud. I have ever been againſt that practice. This can only work upon weak heads; as for the ſound, there are ſurer, as well as more honeſt ways to keep up their courage, and to excuſe croſs accidents.

Heaven never ſaw ſo great an animoſity as that betwixt Cæſar and Pompey, nor ever will; and yet I obſerve methinks in thoſe brave ſouls a great moderation towards one another. It was a jealouſy of honour and command, which did not tranſport them to a furious and indiſcreet hatred; theirs was hatred, without malignity and detraction. In their hotteſt exploits, I diſcover ſome remains of reſpect and good-will; and therefore am of opinion, that, had it been poſſible, each of them would rather have done his buſineſs without the ruin of the other, than with it. Take notice how much otherwiſe matters went with Marius and Sylla?

We muſt not be ſo deſperately drove by our affections and intereſt. As when I was young, I oppoſed the progreſs of love, which I perceived to advance too faſt upon me, and took care leſt it ſhould at laſt become ſo pleaſing, as to captivate, and wholly reduce me to its mercy: So I do the ſame upon all other occaſions where my will runs on with too keen an appetite. I lean oppoſite to the ſide it inclines to, as I find it going to plunge and make itſelf drunk with its own wine; I avoid nouriſhing its pleaſure ſo far, that I cannot recover it without a cruel loſs. Souls that, through their own ſtupidity, only diſcern things by halves, have this happineſs, that they ſmart leaſt with hurtful things. It is a mental leproſy that has ſome appearance of health,

health, and ſuch a health as philoſophy does not altogether contemn; but yet we have no reaſon to call it wiſdom, as we often do. And after this manner one antiently mocked Diogenes, who in the depth of winter, and ſtark-naked, went to embrace a ſtatue covered with ſnow for a trial of his patience *. The other meeting him in this plight, 'Art thou not very cold,' ſaid he †? 'Not at all,' replied Diogenes. 'Why then,' ſaid the other, 'What great and exemplary thing canſt thou 'think thou doſt, in embracing the ſnow?' A man, to take a true meaſure of conſtancy, muſt neceſſarily know what ſuffering is.

But ſouls that are to meet with croſs events, and the injuries of fortune in their depth and ſeverity, that are to weigh and taſte them according to their natural weight and ſharpneſs, let ſuch ſhow their ſkill in avoiding the cauſes and diverting the blow. What did king Cotys do ‖? He paid liberally for the rich and beautiful veſſel that had been preſented him; but it being exceeding brittle, he immediately broke it, to prevent in good time ſo eaſy a matter of diſpleaſure againſt his ſervants. In like manner, I have willingly avoided all confuſion in my affairs, and never coveted to have my eſtate contiguous to thoſe of my relations, and ſuch with whom I coveted a ſtrict friendſhip; whence matters of unkindneſs, and which has oft occaſioned a ſtrangeneſs and a ſeparation. I have formerly loved the hazardous games of cards and dice, but have long ſince left them off, only for this reaſon, that though I put a good face on my loſſes, I was vexed at my heart. Let a man of honour, who ought heartily to reſent a lie and an affront, and who is not to take a ſcurvy excuſe for ſatisfaction, avoid occaſions of diſpute. I ſhun melancholic and moroſe men, as I would do the plague. And in matters I cannot treat of without emotion and concern, I never meddle, if not compelled by my duty. "Melius non incipient, quam deſinent ¶. 'A man 'had better never to have begun, than to leave un-'done.'

* Diog. Laert. in the life of Diogenes the cynic. Lib. vi. ſec. 23. † Plutarch in the notable ſayings of the Lacedæmonians. ‖ Plutarch in the notable ſayings of antient kings, &c. in the article Cotys. ¶ Senec. ep. 92

'done.' The ſureſt way therefore, is, to prepare a man's ſelf beforehand for occaſions. I know very well, that ſome wiſe men have taken another courſe, and have not feared to grapple and engage to the utmoſt upon ſeveral ſubjects. Such are confident of their own ſtrength, under which they protect themſelves in all ill ſucceſſes, making their patience wreſtle with diſaſters.

——*Velut rupes vaſtum quæ prodit in æquor,*
Obvia ventorum furiis, expoſtaque ponto,
Vim cunctam atque minas perfert cœlique mariſque,
Ipſa immota manens **.

He as a rock amongſt vaſt billows ſtood,
Scorning loud winds, and raging of the flood,
And fix'd remaining all the force deſies
Muſter'd from threat'ning ſeas and thund'ring ſkies*.

Let us never attempt theſe examples, we ſhall never come up to them. They ſet themſelves reſolutely, and without trouble, to behold the ruin of their country, which had a right to all the good they could do. This is too much, and too harſh for our vulgar ſouls to undergo. Cato indeed gave up the nobleſt life that ever was upon this account; but it is for us meaner ſpirited men to fly from the ſtorm as far as we can; we ought to make proviſion of reſentment, not of patience, and evade the blows we cannot put by. Zeno ſeeing Chremonides, a young man whom he loved, draw near to ſit down by him, ſuddenly ſtarted up, and Cleanthes demanding of him the reaſon why he did ſo, 'I hear,' ſaid he, 'that phyſicians eſpecially order repoſe, and for-'bid emotion in all tumours †.' Socrates does not ſay, Do not ſurrender to the charms of beauty, ſtand your ground, and do your utmoſt to oppoſe it. Fly from it, ſays he, ſhun the ſight and encounter of it, as you would from ſtrong poiſon that darts and wounds at a diſtance. And his good diſciple‖, either feigning or reciting, but in my opinion, rather reciting than feigning the rare perfections of that great Cyrus, makes him diſtruſtful of his own ſtrength, to reſiſt the charms of the divine beauty of that illuſtrious Panthea, his

** Virgil. Æneid. lib. x. v. 693. * Mr. Ogilby.
† Diogenes Laert. in the life of Zeno. lib. vii. ſec. 17.
‖ Xenophon in his Cyropædia. lib. v. c. 1. v. 3, 4, 5, 6.

captive, in committing her to the obſervation and keeping of another, who was more enamoured than himſelf. And the Holy Ghoſt in like manner, " Ne nos " inducas in tentationem. i. e. ' Lead us not into temp- ' tation,' Matth. vi. ver. 13. We do not pray that our reaſon may not be combated and overcome by concupiſcence, but that it ſhould not be ſo much as tried by it; that we may not be brought into a ſtate wherein we may be ſo much as liable to ſuffer the approaches, ſollicitations, and temptations of ſin: And we beg of almighty God to keep our conſciences quiet, fully, and perfectly free from all communication with evil.

Such as ſay that they have reaſon for their revenging paſſion, or any other ſort of troubleſome agitation of mind, do oft ſay true, as things now are, but not as they were. They ſpeak to us when the cauſes of their error are by themſelves nouriſhed and advanced. But look backward, recal theſe cauſes to their beginning, and there you will put them to a nonplus; will they think their fault leſs for being of longer continuance, and that of an unjuſt beginning, the ſequel can be juſt? Whoever ſhall deſire the good of his country as I do, without freting or pining himſelf, will be chagrined, but will not ſwoon to ſee it threatning either its final ruin, or a not leſs ruinous continuance. Poor veſſel, which the waves, the winds, and the pilot, ſteer with ſuch contrary views!

——in tam diverſa, magiſter,
Ventus, & unda trahunt *.

He who does not pant for the favour of princes, as a thing he cannot live without, does not much concern himſelf at the coldneſs of their reception and countenance, nor at the inconſtancy of their humours. He who does not brood over his children, or his honours, with a ſlaviſh fondneſs, lives commodiouſly enough after their loſs. He that does good principally for his own ſatisfaction, will not be much troubled to ſee men judge of his actions contrary to his merit. A quarter of an ounce of patience will be enough againſt ſuch inconveniencies. I find ſatisfaction in this receipt, redeeming

* Buchanan.

deeming myſelf in the beginning as cheap as I can; and am ſenſible that I have thereby eſcaped much trouble and many difficulties. With very little ado I ſtop the firſt ſally of my paſſions, and leave the ſubject that begins to be troubleſome before it tranſports me. He who ſtops not the ſtart, will never be able to ſtop the career. He who cannot keep the paſſions out, will never drive them out when they are once got in; and he who cannot cruſh them at the beginning, will never do it in the end, nor ever recover his fall, if he cannot ſtand the ſhock. " Et enim ipſæ ſe impellunt, ubi " ſemel a ratione diſceſſum eſt: ipſaque ſibi imbecilli- " tas indulget, in altumque provehitur imprudens: ne " invenerit locum conſiſtendi *." i. e. ' For men are pre- ' cipitant, when once they loſe their reaſon; and ' frailty does ſo far indulge itſelf, that it is indiſcreet- ' ly carried out into the deep, and can find no part to ' ſtop at.' I am betimes ſenſible of the little breezes that begin to whiſtle in the ſhrowds, the fore-runners of a ſtorm.

——ceu flamina prima
Cum deprenſa fremunt ſylvis, & cæca volutant
Murmura, venturos nautis prodentia ventos †.

——As when winds riſe,
And ſtopt by woods, a ſudden murmur ſend,
Which doth a ſtorm to mariners portend ‖.

How oft have I done myſelf a manifeſt injuſtice to avoid the hazard of having yet a worſe done me by the judges, after an age of vexations, dirty and vile practices, more enemies to my nature than fire, or the rack? " Convenit a litibus quantum licet, & neſcio an paulo " plus etiam quam licet, abhorrentem eſſe. Eſt enim " non modo liberale paululum nonnunquam de ſuo jure " decedere, ſed interdum etiam fructuoſum ¶." ' A ' man ſhould be an enemy to all contention as much as ' he lawfully may, and, for aught I know, ſomething ' more: For it is not only generous, but ſometimes ' alſo advantageous, to recede a little from one's right.' Were we wiſe, we ought to rejoice and boaſt, as I one

* Cicero Tuſc. lib. iv. c. 18. † Æneid, lib. x. v. 97, &c.
‖ Mr. Ogilby. ¶ Cicer. de offic. lib. ii. c. 8.

day heard a young gentleman of a good family very innocently do, that his mother had loſt her trial, as if it had been a cough, a fever, or ſomething very troubleſome to keep: even the favours that fortune might have given me through relations, or acquaintance with thoſe who have ſovereign authority in thoſe affairs, I have very conſciencioufly waved, and very carefully avoided imploying them to the prejudice of others, and of advancing my pretenſions above their true value. In fine, I have ſo much prevailed by my endeavours, in a happy hour I may ſpeak it, that I am to this day a virgin from all ſuits in law; though I have had very fair offers made me, and with a very juſt title, would I have hearkened to them: and a virgin from quarrels too. I have almoſt paſt over a long life without any offence of moment, either active or paſſive, or without ever hearing a worſe word than my own name: a rare favour of heaven.

Our greateſt agitations ariſe from ridiculous motives and cauſes. What ruin did our laſt duke of Burgundy run into by a quarrel about a cart-load of ſheep-ſkins *? And was not the graving of a ſeal the firſt and principal cauſe of the greateſt commotion that this machine of the world did ever undergo †? For Pompey and Cæſar are but the off-ſets and ſlips of the two others. And I have, in my time ſeen the wiſeſt heads in this kingdom aſſembled with great ceremony, and at the publick expence, about treaties and agreements, of which the true deciſion did in the mean time abſolutely depend upon a cabinet-council of ladies, and the inclination of ſome fooliſh woman. The poets had a right notion of this, when they put all Greece and Aſia to fire and ſword for an apple. Enquire why ſuch a man ſtakes his life and honour upon the fortune of his rapier and dagger; let him acquaint you with the occaſion of the quarrel, he cannot do it without bluſhing, it is ſo idle and frivolous.

A little thing will do at ſetting off, but being once imbarked, all cords draw; great proviſions are then required,

* See the memoirs of Philip de Comines, lib. v. c. 1.

† The civil war betwixt Marius and Sylla. See Plutarch in the life of Marius, chap. 3. of Amyot's tranſlation.

required, more hard, and more important. How much eaſier is it not to enter in, than it is to get out? Now, we ſhould proceed contrary to the reed, which at its firſt ſpringing, produces a long and ſtraight ſtalk, but afterwards, as if tired and out of breath, it runs into thick and frequent knots, as ſo many pauſes; which demonſtrates that it has no more its firſt vigour and conſtancy. It were better to begin fair and ſoftly, and to keep a man's breath and vigorous efforts for the height and ſtreſs of the buſineſs. We guide affairs in their beginnings, and have them then in our own power; but afterwards when they are in motion, it is they that guide and govern us, and we are to follow them. Yet do I not pretend by this to ſay, that this council has diſcharged me of all difficulty, and that I have not often had enough to do to curb and reſtrain my paſſions. They are not always to be governed according to the meaſure of occaſions, and the entrance on them is often ſharp and violent; ſo it is, that thereby much may be ſaved and got; except for thoſe, who in well-doing are not ſatisfied with any benefit, if reputation be wanting: for in truth, ſuch an effect is of no eſtimation but by every one to himſelf. You are better contented with it, but not more eſteemed; ſeeing you reformed yourſelf before you had the ſubject in view. Yet not in this only, but in all other duties of life, the way of thoſe who aim at honour, is very different from that they proceed by, who propoſe to themſelves order and reaſon. I find ſome who raſhly and furiouſly ruſh into the liſts, and cool in the courſe. As Plutarch ſays, That as thoſe who through falſe modeſty are ſoft and ready to grant whatever is deſired of them, are afterwards as apt to break their word, and to recant; ſo likewiſe he who enters lightly into a quarrel, is ſubject to go as lightly out. The ſame difficulty that keeps me from entering into it, would, when I am once provoked and warmly engaged in it, ſpur me to maintain it with great obſtinacy. It is the tyranny of cuſtom; that when a man is once engaged, he muſt perſiſt, or die. Undertake coldly, ſaid Bias, but purſue with ardour *. For want of prudence, men grow faint-hearted, which is ſtill more intolerable. Moſt

* Diogenes Laert. in the life of Bias, lib. i. § 87.

Most accommodations of the quarrels of these days of ours, are shameful and false; we only seek to save appearances, and in the mean time betray and disavow our true intentions. We put a gloss on the fact. We know very well how we said the thing, and in what sense we spoke it, and both all the company, and our friends, whom we would make sensible of our advantage, understand it well enough too. It is at the expence of our liberty, and the honour of our courage, that we disown our thoughts, and seek subterfuge in falshoods to make us friends. We give ourselves the lie, to excuse the lie we have given to another. You are not to consider, if your word or action may admit of another interpretation; it is your own true and sincere interpretation that you are thenceforward to maintain, whatever it cost you. Men speak to your virtue and conscience, which are not things to be disguised. Let us leave these pitiful ways and expedients to the chicanery of the courts of the law. The excuses and satisfactions that I see every day made to excuse indiscretion, seem to me more scandalous than the indiscretion itself. It were better to affront your adversary a second time, than to offend yourself by giving him so unmanly a satisfaction. You have braved him in your anger, and you go to appease and wheedle him in your cooler and better sense, and by that means lay yourself lower than you set yourself up. I do not think any thing a gentleman can say so vicious in him, as unsaying what he has said is infamous; when he is forced to unsay it by authority; forasmuch as obstinacy is more excusable in such a man than pusillanimity. Passions are as easy for me to avoid, as they are hard for me to moderate. "Excinduntur facilius animo, quam temperantur." *i. e.* 'They are more easily eradicated than governed.' Who cannot attain to this noble stoical impassibility, let him secure himself in the bosom of this popular stupidity of mine. What those great souls performed by their virtue, I enure myself to do by constitution. The middle region harbours tempests; the two extremes of philosophers and peasants concur in tranquillity and happiness.

Felix,

Fælix, qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas;
Atque metus omnes, & in exorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, ſtrepitumq; Acherontis avari.
Fortunatus, & ille, Deos qui novit agreſtes,
Panaq; Sylvanumq; ſenem, Nymphaſq; ſorores *.

Happy the man who vers'd in nature's laws,
Of her effects can trace the wond'rous cauſe;
Who without fear his certain fate can meet,
And trample death itſelf beneath his feet;
And happy he who haunts the rural gods,
Pan, and Sylvanus, and the nymphs abodes †.

The births of all things are weak and tender, and therefore are we to have an eye to their beginnings; for as when in their infancy the danger is not perceived; ſo when grown up, the remedy is no more to be found. I had every day encountered a million of croſſes, harder to digeſt in the progreſs of my ambition, than it was for me to curb the natural propenſion that inclined me to it.

——— *jure perhorrui,*
Latè conſpicuum tolere verticem ‖.
Well might thy friend be ſhy,
To raiſe his head too high ¶.

All publick actions are ſubject to various and uncertain interpretations, for too many heads judge of them. Some ſay of this city-employment of mine (and I am willing to ſay a word or two of it, not that it is worth ſo much, but to give an account of my manners in ſuch things) that I behaved myſelf in it like a man not eaſy to be moved, and with a languid affection: and they have ſome colour for what they ſay. I endeavour to keep my mind and my thoughts in repoſe. "Cum "ſemper natura, tum etiam ætate jam quietus." *i. e.* 'As being always quiet by nature, ſo alſo now by age.' And if they ſometimes laſh out upon ſome rude and ſenſible impreſſion, it is in truth without my advice. Yet from this natural decay of my ſpirits men ought not to conclude a total inability in me; (for want of care

* Virgil. Georg. lib. ii. v. 490. † Mr. Benſon. ‖ Hor. lib. iii. Ode 16. v. 18. ¶ Sir Rich. Fanſhaw.

care and want of ſenſe, are two things) and much leſs any ſlight or ingratitude towards that corporation, who did their utmoſt to oblige me, both before they knew me and after. And they did much more for me in chuſing me anew, than in conferring that honour upon me at firſt; I wiſh them all the good that can be. And doubtleſs, upon occaſion, there is nothing I would have ſpared for their ſervice; I exerted myſelf as much for them as I would have done for myſelf. They are a good, warlike and generous people, but capable of obedience and diſcipline, and of whom good uſe may be made, if they are well guided. They ſay alſo, that my adminiſtration was paſſed over without any remark or eclat of moment. It is true: they moreover accuſe my indolence in a time when every body almoſt was convinced of doing too much. I am impatient to be doing where my will ſpurs me on, but this point is an enemy to perſeverance. Whoever will make uſe of me, according to my own way, let him employ me in affairs where vigour and liberty are required; where a direct, ſhort, and moreover a hazardous conduct are neceſſary, I peradventure might do ſomething; but if it muſt be long, ſubtile, laborious, artificial and intricate, they were better apply to ſomebody elſe. All important offices are not difficult: I was prepared for work a little more rough, had there been great occaſion; for it is in my power to do ſomething more than I do, and than I love to do; I did not to my knowledge, omit any thing that my duty really required; it is true, that I eaſily forgot thoſe offices that ambition mixes with duty, and gilds with its title. Thoſe are they, that for the moſt part engroſs the eyes and ears, and give men the moſt ſatisfaction. Not the thing, but the appearance, contents them. They think men ſleep if they hear no noiſe. My humour is an enemy to tumult. I could appeaſe a riot without diſturbing myſelf, and chaſtiſe a diſorder without many words. If I ſtand in need of anger, and inflammation, I borrow it, and put it on as a maſk; my deportment is dull; rather faint than ſharp. I do not condemn a magiſtrate that ſleeps, provided the people under his charge ſleep as well as he: the laws in that caſe ſleep too. For my part,

part, I commend a ſmooth, ſolitary and ſilent life. "Neque ſubmiſſam, & abjectam, neque ſe efferentem*." 'i. e. A life equally free from meanneſs and inſolence.' My fortune requires it to be ſuch. I am deſcended from a family that has lived without luſtre or tumult, and time out of mind particularly ambitious of valour and ſincerity. Our people now adays are ſo bred up to buſtle and oſtentation, that good-nature, moderation, equity, conſtancy, and ſuch quiet and obſcure qualities, are no longer regarded. Rough bodies are eaſily felt, the ſmooth ones ſcarce at all. Sickneſs is felt, health little, if at all, no more than the oils that foment us, in compariſon to the pains that torture us. It is acting for a man's reputation and particular profit, not for the publick weal, to refer that to be done in the forum, which a man may as well do in the council-chamber, and to put off to noon-day, what might have been done the night before; and to be zealous to do that himſelf which his collegue can do as well as he. So ſome chirurgions of Greece performed their operations upon ſcaffolds, in the ſight of the people, to draw more practice and cuſtom. They think that good rules cannot be underſtood but by the ſound of trumpet. Ambition is not a vice of little people, and of ſuch abilities as ours. One ſaid to Alexander, Your father will leave you a great dominion, eaſy and peaceable; this youth was emulous of his father's victories, and the juſtice of his government, and did not wiſh to have enjoyed the empire of the world in eaſe and peace. Alcibiades in Plato, had rather die exceeding young, beautiful, rich, noble and learned, than to continue in ſuch an effeminate ſtate. This diſeaſe is peradventure excuſable in ſo ſtrong and ſo capacious a mind. When theſe poor mean ſouls enlarge themſelves, and think to ſpread their fame, for having given right judgment in an affair, or continued the diſcipline of keeping the guard of a gate of their city; the more they think to exalt their heads, the more they ſhew their tails. This little well-doing has neither body nor life; it vaniſhes in the firſt mouth, and goes no farther than from one ſtreet to another. Talk of it in God's name to your ſon, or

* Cicero de Offic. lib. i. c. 34.

or your ſervant; like that old fellow, who having no other auditor of his praiſes, nor commender of his valour, boaſted to his chamber-maid, crying out, O Perret, What a gallant brave man haſt thou to thy maſter! At the worſt talk of it to yourſelf, like a counſellor of my acquaintance, who having diſgorged a whole bundle of law caſes, full of paragraphs, with very great heat, and as great folly, coming out of the council-chamber to the piſſing place, was heard very conſcientiouſly to mutter betwixt his teeth, "Non nobis, Do-"mine, non nobis, ſed nomini tuo da gloriam." *i. e.* 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy 'name be the glory.' He who can get it of nobody elſe, may pay himſelf out of his own purſe. Fame is not proſtituted at ſo cheap a rate. Rare and exemplary actions, to which it is due, would not endure the company of this prodigious crowd of little temporary performances. Marble may exalt your titles as much as you pleaſe, for having repaired a rood of a ruinous wall, or cleanſed a publick aqueduct, but no men of ſenſe will do it. Renown does not attend every good deed, if novelty and difficulty be not conjoined in it. Nay, ſo much as meer eſtimation, according to the ſtoicks, is not due to every action that proceeds from virtue; neither will they allow him ſo much as thanks, who out of temperance forbears to meddle with any old blear-eyed hag. Such as have known the admirable qualities of Scipio Africanus, deny him the glory that Panætius attributes to him, of being abſtinent from gifts, as a glory not ſo much his, as that of the age he lived in. We have pleaſures ſuitable to our fortunes, let us not uſurp thoſe of grandeur. Our own are more natural, and by ſo much more ſolid and ſure, as they are more low. If not for that of conſcience, yet at leaſt for ambition ſake, let us reject ambition, let us diſdain that thirſt of honour and renown, ſo low and beggarly, that it makes us aſk it as an alms from all ſorts of people: "Quæ eſt iſta laus quæ poſſit e macel-"lo peti *? *i. e.* 'What praiſe is that which is to be 'got at the ſhambles?' by abject means, and at any cheap rate ſoever. To be ſo honoured is diſhonour. Let

* Cicero. de Fin. Bon. & Mal. lib. xi. c. 15.

Let us learn to be no more greedy, than we are capable of honour. To be puffed up with every action that is innocent, or of uſe, is only for thoſe with whom ſuch deeds are extraordinary and rare; they will value it as it coſts them. How much more a good effect makes a noiſe, ſo much I abate of the goodneſs of it; and enter into ſuſpicion that it was more performed to be talked of, than upon the account of its goodneſs: Being expoſed upon the ſtall, it is half ſold. Thoſe actions have much more grace, that ſlip from the hand of the performer negligently, and without noiſe; and which ſome honeſt man afterwards chuſes out, and raiſes from the ſhade, to produce it to the light for their own ſakes. The vaineſt man in the world ſaid, "Mihi "quidem laudabiliora videntur omnia, quæ ſine vendi- "tatione, & ſine populo teſte fiunt *." *i. e.* 'All things 'truly ſeem more laudable to me, that are performed 'without oſtentation, and without the teſtimony of the 'people.' I had nothing to do but to preſerve and to continue, which are ſilent and ſenſible effects. Innovation is of great luſtre, but it is interdicted at this time, when we are preſſed upon, and have nothing to defend ourſelves from but novelties. To forbear doing, is often as generous as to do, but it is not ſo conſpicuous; and the little good I have in me is all almoſt of this kind. In fine, occaſions in this employment of mine, have been conſiſtent with my humour, and I thank them for it. Is there any one who deſires to be ſick for the ſake of ſeeing his phyſician employed? And ſhould not that phyſician be whipped, who wiſhed the plague amongſt us, that he might put his art in practice? I was never of that wicked humour, though common enough, to deſire that the trouble and diſorders of this city ſhould ſet off and do honour to my government; I heartily contributed all I could to their tranquillity and eaſe. He who will not thank me for the order, the ſweet and ſilent calm that accompanied my adminiſtration, cannot however deprive me of the ſhare of it that belongs to me by the title of my good fortune. And I am of ſuch a compoſition, that I would as willingly be happy as wiſe; and had rather owe my ſucceſſes

* Cicero Tuſc. Quæſt. lib ii. c. 26.

ſucceſſes purely to the favour of almighty God, than to any operation of my own. I had ſufficiently publiſhed to the world my unfitneſs for ſuch publick offices; but I have ſomething in me yet worſe than incapacity; which is, that I am not much diſpleaſed at it, and that I do not much go about to cure it, conſidering the courſe of life that I have propoſed to myſelf. Neither have I ſatisfied myſelf in this employment, but I have very near arrived at what I promiſed myſelf from my own performance, and have yet much ſurpaſſed what I promiſed them with whom I had to do: for I am apt to promiſe ſomething leſs than what I am able to do, and than what I hope to make good. I aſſure myſelf that I have left no impreſſions of offence or hatred behind me, and to leave a regret or deſire of me amongſt them, I at leaſt know very well that I did never much affect it.

——mene huic confidere monſtro,
Mene ſalis placidi vultum, fluctuſque quietos
Ignorare * *?*

Me doſt thou bid to truſt the treach'rous deep!
Her harlot ſmiles ſhould I believe again,
And oft betray'd, not know the monſter main.

CHAP. VI. *Of Cripples.*

IT is now two or three years ago that they made the year ten days ſhorter in France. How many changes may we expect to follow this reformation? This was properly removing heaven and earth at once; and yet nothing ſtirs from its place: my neighbours ſtill find their ſeaſons for ſowing and reaping, and of trading, together with the lucky and unlucky days, juſt at the ſame inſtant, where they had time out of mind aſſigned them. There is no error perceived in our old uſage, nor is there amendment found in the new. So great an uncertainty there is throughout; ſo groſs, obſcure and dull is our perception! It is ſaid, that this regulation might have been carried on with leſs inconvenience, by ſubtracting for ſome years, according to the example

* Virgil. Æneid. lib. v. ver. 849.

example of Auguſtus, the Biſſextile, which is upon the whole a day of hindrance and confuſion, till we had exactly ſatisfied that debt; which is not performed neither by this correction, and we yet remain ſome days in arrear: and ſurely by the ſame means care might be taken for the future, by ordering, That after the revolution of ſuch a year, or ſuch a number of years, this ſupernumerary day might be always eclipſed, ſo that we could not henceforward exceed above four-and-twenty hours in our miſreckoning. We have no other account of time but years; the world has for many ages made uſe of that only, and yet it is a meaſure that to this day we have not fixed upon; ſuch an one, that we ſtill doubt what form other nations have variouſly given to it, and what was the true uſe of it. What does this ſaying of ſome mean, 'That the heavens in growing old, preſs nearer towards us, and put us to an uncertainty even of hours and days?' And that which Plutarch ſays of the months, 'That aſtrology had not, in his time, determined the motion of the moon?' So, what a fine condition are we in to keep records of things paſt!

I was juſt now ruminating, as I often do, what a free and roving thing human reaſon is. I ordinarily ſee, that men, in things propoſed to them, are more curious to find out the reaſon of a thing, than to find out the truth of it. They ſlip over preſuppoſitions, but nicely examine conſequences. They leave the things and fly to the cauſes. Pleaſant diſputants! The knowledge of cauſes does only concern him who has the conduct of things, not us, who are only to undergo them, and who have a full and compleat uſe of them according to our need, without penetrating into their original and eſſence. Neither is wine more pleaſant to him that knows its firſt qualities. On the contrary, both the body and ſoul alter and interrupt the right they have of the uſe of the world, and of themſelves, by mixing with it the opinion of learning. Effects concern us, but the means not at all. To determine and to diſtribute appertain to the ſuperior and the governor, as it does to the ſubject and the learner to accept it. Let me reſume our cuſtom. They com-

monly begin thus: How is ſuch a thing done? Whereas they ſhould ſay, Is ſuch a thing done? By our talk we are able to create an hundred other worlds, and to find out the beginnings and contexture; it needs neither matter nor foundation. Let the tongue run, it builds as well in a Vacuum as on the earth; and with inanity as well as matter.

Dare pondus idonea fumo *.

And can give weight to ſmoke.

I find, that almoſt throughout we ſhould ſay, There is no ſuch thing; and ſhould myſelf oft make uſe of this anſwer, but I dare not; for they cry, It is a defect produced from ignorance and weakneſs of underſtanding. And I am forced, for the moſt part, to play the impertinent for company, and to prate of frivolous and idle ſubjects, which I believe ne'er a word of. Beſides that, in truth, it is a little rude and quarrelſome, flatly to deny a propoſition; and there are few people but will affirm, eſpecially in things hard to be believed, that they have ſeen them, or at leaſt will name ſuch witneſſes whoſe authority ſtops our contradiction. By this means we know the foundation and means of a thouſand things that never were; and the world ſcolds about a thouſand queſtions, of which the pro and con are both falſe. "Ita finitima ſunt falſa veris, ut in "præcipitem locum non debeat ſe ſapiens commit-"tere †." *i. e.* Falſe things are ſo like the true, that 'a wiſe man ſhould not truſt himſelf upon the preci-'pice.' Truth and lies have the ſame aſpect, their port, taſte and paces, are the ſame, and we look upon them with the ſame eye. I find that we are not only remiſs in defending ourſelves from deceit, but we ſeek and offer ourſelves to be gulled; we love to entangle ourſelves in vanity, as a thing conformable to our being.

I have ſeen the birth of many miracles of my time, which although they were ſtill born, yet have we not failed to foreſee what they would have come to, had they

* Perſius Sat. v. ver. 20. † Cicero Quæſt. Acad. lib. iv. c. 21.

they lived. It is but finding the end of the clue, and a man may wind off as much as he will; and there is a greater diſtance betwixt nothing, and the minuteſt thing in the world, than there is betwixt that and the greateſt. Now, the firſt that are tinctured with this beginning of novelty, when they ſet out their hiſtory, find, by the oppoſition they meet with, where the difficulty of perſuaſion lies, and caulk that place with ſome falſe piece. Beſides that, "Inſita hominibus li-" bidine alendi de induſtria rumores," 'men having a 'natural luſt to propagate reports,' we naturally make a conſcience of reſtoring what has been lent us, without ſome uſury and addition of our own invention. Private error firſt creates public error; and afterwards, in turn, public error cauſes a particular one; thus all this fabric riſes by patchwork from hand to hand, ſo that the remoteſt witneſs knows more than thoſe that are the neareſt; and the laſt informed is more certain than the firſt. 'Tis a natural progreſs: for whoever believes any thing, thinks it a work of charity to perſuade another into the ſame opinion. Which the better to do, he will make no difficulty of adding as much of his own invention, as he conceives neceſſary to obviate the reſiſtance or want of conception he ſuppoſes in others. I myſelf, who make a particular conſcience of lying, and am not very ſolicitous of gaining credit and authority to what I ſay, do yet find, that in the arguments I have in hand, being warned with the oppoſition of another, or by the proper heat of my own narration, I ſwell and puff up my ſubject by voice, motion, vigour and force of words; and moreover by extention and amplification; not without prejudice to the naked truth: but I do it on condition nevertheleſs, that to the firſt who brings me to recollection and who aſks me the plain and real truth, I preſently ſurrender, and deliver it to him without exaggeration, without emphaſis, or interlarding of my own. A quick and earneſt way of ſpeaking, as mine is, is apt to run into hyperbole. There is nothing to which men commonly are more inclined, than to give way to their own opinions. Where the ordinary means fail us, we add command and force, fire and ſword. 'Tis a misfortune to be at

that paſs, that the beſt touchſtone of the truth, muſt be the multitude of believers, in a crowd, where the number of fools ſo much exceeds the wiſe. " Quaſi " vero quidquam ſit tam valde, quam nihil ſapere, " vulgare. Sanitatis patrocinium eſt, inſanientium " turba *." *i. e.* ' As if any thing were ſo common as ' ignorance. The mob of fools is a protection to the ' wiſe.' 'Tis hard for a man to form his judgment againſt the common opinions. The firſt perſuaſion taken of the very ſubject itſelf, poſſeſſes the ſimple, and from that it ſpreads to the wiſe, by the authority of the number and antiquity of the witneſſes. For my part, what I ſhould not believe from one, I ſhould not believe from a hundred; and I do not judge of opinions by the years. 'Tis not long ſince one of our princes, in whom the gout had ſpoiled an excellent natural genius, and ſprightly diſpoſition, ſuffered himſelf to be ſo far perſuaded with the report of the wonderful operations of a certain prieſt, who by words and geſtures cured all ſorts of diſeaſes, as to go a long journey to ſeek him out; and by the force of his apprehenſion for ſome time, ſo perſuaded and laid his legs aſleep for ſeveral hours, as to obtain that ſervice from them which they had a long time left off. Had fortune packed together five or ſix ſuch accidents, it had been enough to have brought this miracle into nature. There was after this diſcovered ſo much ſimplicity, and ſo little art in the architect of ſuch operations, that he was thought too contemptible to be puniſhed; as would be the caſe of moſt ſuch things, were they examined to the bottom. " Miramur ex intervallo fallentia †," *i. e.* ' We admire ' at things that deceive by their diſtance.' So does our ſight oft repreſent to us ſtrange images at a diſtance, that vaniſh in approaching them near. " Nunquam ad " liquidum fama perducitur ‡.", *i. e.* ' Fame never re- ' ports things in their true light.'

'Tis to be wondered at, from how many idle beginnings and frivolous cauſes ſuch famous impreſſions commonly proceed. This it is that obſtructs the information; for whilſt we ſeek out the cauſes, and the great and

* Cicero de div. lib. ii. c. 39. Item Aug. de Civit Dei. lib. vi. c. 10. † Senec. Ep. 118. § Qu. Curtius lib. 9. c. 2.

and weighty ends, worthy of ſo great a name, we loſe the true ones. They eſcape our ſight by their littleneſs: and, in truth, a prudent, diligent and ſubtle enquirer is neceſſary in ſuch ſearches; one who is indifferent and not prepoſſeſſed.

To this very hour all theſe miracles and ſtrange events have concealed themſelves from me; I have never ſeen a more evident monſter or miracle in the world than myſelf: a man grows familiar with all ſtrange things by time and cuſtom; but the more I viſit, and the better I know myſelf, the more does my own deformity aſtoniſh me, and the leſs I underſtand of myſelf.

The chief prerogative of advancing and producing ſuch accidents, is reſerved to fortune. Riding the other day through a village, about two leagues from my houſe, I found the place yet hot with the rumour of a miracle lately happened there, wherewith the neighbourhood had been ſeveral months amuſed, ſo that neighbouring provinces began to take the alarm, and there was a vaſt concourſe to it of all ſorts of people. A young fellow of the town had one night counterfeited the voice of a ſpirit in his own houſe, without any other deſign, but only for preſent ſport; but this having ſucceeded with him a little better than he expected, in order to illuſtrate his farce with more actors, he took a ſtupid ſilly country girl into the ſcene, and at laſt they were three of the ſame age and underſtanding, who from domeſtic lectures, proceeded to public preaching, hiding themſelves under the altar of the church, never ſpeaking but by night, and forbidding any light to be brought. From words which tended to the converſion of the world, and threats of the day of judgment (for theſe are ſubjects under the authority and reverence of which impoſture does moſt ſecurely lie concealed) they proceeded to viſions and geſtures, ſo ſimple and ridiculous, that nothing could hardly be ſo groſs in the diverſion of little children: yet had fortune never ſo little favoured the deſign, who knows to what height this juggling might have at laſt arrived? Theſe poor devils are at preſent in priſon, and are like to pay for their impoſition on the public; and I know not whether

ſome judge may not alſo make them ſmart for impoſing on him. We ſee clearly in this which is diſcovered; but in many things of the like nature, that exceed our knowledge, I am of opinion, that we ought to ſuſpend our judgment, and to keep it in a ſtate as fit to reject as to receive them.

Great abuſe, or, to ſpeak more boldly, all the abuſes of the world are begot by our being taught to be afraid of profeſſing our ignorance, and from our being bound to accept what we are not able to confute. We ſpeak of all things by precepts and deciſion. The ſtile of Rome was, that even that which a witneſs depoſed he had ſeen with his own eyes, and what a judge determined from his moſt certain knowledge, was couched in this form of ſpeaking, It ſeems. They make me hate things that are likely, when they impoſe them on me for infallible. I love thoſe words which mollify and moderate the temerity of our propoſitions, Peradventure, in ſome ſort, ſome ſay, I think, and the like: and had I been to train up children, I would have ſo familiariſed them to the interrogatory and not peremptory way of anſwering, What does this mean? I underſtand it not; it may be; is it true? that they ſhould rather have retained the form of pupils at threeſcore years old, than to go out doctors at ten, as they now do. Whoever will be cured of ignorance, muſt confeſs it.

Iris is the daughter of Thaumantis; admiration is the foundation of all philoſophy, inquiry the progreſs, and ignorance the end. Nay in truth, there is a ſort of ignorance ſtrong and generous, that yields nothing in honour and courage to knowledge; an ignorance, of which to conceive, requires no leſs knowledge than to conceive of knowledge itſelf. I ſaw in my younger years a proceſs which Corras a counſellor of Tholouſe put out in print, of a ſtrange accident of two men, who preſented themſelves the one for the other. I remember (and I hardly remember any thing ſo well) that he ſeemed to have rendered the impoſture of him whom he judged to be guilty, ſo wonderful, and ſo far exceeding both our knowledge and his own, who was the judge, that I thought it a very bold ſentence

tence which condemned him to be hanged. Let us take up ſome form of arreſt, that ſays, The court underſtands nothing of the matter; more freely and ingenuouſly than the Areopagites did, who finding themſelves perplexed with a cauſe they could not unravel, ordered the parties to appear again after an hundred years. The witches of my neighbourhood run a hazard of their lives, upon the intelligence of every new author, that gives a real ſubſtance to their dreams. To accommodate the examples that Holy Writ gives us of ſuch things, examples that are moſt certain and irrefragable, and to make our modern events of the ſame kind, as we neither ſee their cauſes nor their means, will require another ſort of wit than ours. It peradventure only appertains to that moſt potent teſtimony, to tell us, This is true, and that is true, and not that other. God ought to be believed, and certainly with very good reaſon; but not one amongſt us, for all that, who is aſtoniſhed at his own narration, (and he muſt of neceſſity be aſtoniſhed, if he be not out of his wits) whether he employ it in the caſe of another, or againſt himſelf.

I am plain and blunt, and am inclined to that which is ſolid and more likely, avoiding thoſe antient reproaches. "Majorem fidem homines adhibent eis quæ "non intelligunt. Cupidine humani ingenii libentius "obſcura creduntur *." i. e. 'Men are moſt apt to 'believe obſcure things and what they leaſt underſtand.' I ſee very well that men are angry, and that I am forbidden to doubt upon pain of execrable injuries. A new way of perſuading! God forgive them. I am not to be cuffed into belief. Let them be angry with thoſe that accuſe their opinion of falſity, I only accuſe it of difficulty and boldneſs; and condemn the oppoſite affirmation equally with them, though not ſo imperiouſly He who eſtabliſhes his argument by authority and hectoring, diſcovers his reaſon to be weak. For a verbal and ſcholaſtic altercation, let them have as much appearance as their contradictors. "Videantur "ſane

* Tacit. Hiſt. lib. i. c. 22.

" ſane, non affirmentur modo *." i. e. ' Be the things ' that are advanced probable, well and good; provided ' they are not abſolutely affirmed.' But in the real conſequence they draw from it, theſe have much the advantage. To convince men, a clear and ſhining light is required. Our life is too real and eſſential a thing to warrant thoſe ſupernatural and fantaſtic accidents. As to drugs and poiſons, I throw them out of my account, as being the worſt ſorts of homicide: yet even in this, 'tis ſaid, that men are not always to inſiſt upon the proper confeſſions of theſe people; for men have ſometimes been known to accuſe themſelves of the murder of perſons who have afterwards been found living and well. In theſe other extravagant accuſations, I ſhould be apt to ſay, that it is ſufficient, that a man, what recommendation ſoever he may have, be believed in human things; but of what is beyond his conception, and of a ſupernatural effect, he ought then only to be believed, when 'tis authorized by a ſupernatural approbation. The privilege it has pleaſed God to give to ſome of our teſtimonies, ought not to be lightly communicated and made cheap. I have my ears battered with a thouſand ſuch flim-flams as theſe. ' Three ſaw him ſuch a day in the eaſt; three the next ' day in the weſt; at ſuch an hour, in ſuch a place, ' and in ſuch a habit.' In earneſt, I ſhould not take my own word for it. How much more natural and likely do I find it that two men ſhould lye, than that one man, in twelve hours time, ſhould fly with the wind from eaſt to weſt? How much more natural, that our underſtanding ſhould be perverted by the volubility of our diſordered minds, than it is that one of us ſhould be carried, by a ſtrange ſpirit, upon a broom-ſtaff, fleſh and bones, as we are, up the ſhaft of a chimney? Les us not ſeek deluſions that are external and unknown, we who are perpetually agitated with deluſions that are domeſtic and our own. Methinks a man is pardonable in diſbelieving a miracle, as far at leaſt as he can divert and expunge the verification of it by no wonderful ways. And I am of St. Auguſtine's opinion,

* Cic. acad. quæſt. l. iv. c. 27.

opinion, that 'tis better to lean towards doubt than aſſurance, in things hard to prove, and dangerous to believe. 'Tis now ſome years ago, that I travelled through the territories of a ſovereign prince, who, in my favour, and to abate my incredulity, did me the hohour to let me ſee, in his own preſence, and in a particular place, ten or twelve priſoners of this kind; and amongſt others, an old hag, a real witch in naſtineſs and deformity, who long had been famous in that profeſſion. I ſaw both proofs and free confeſſions, and I know not what unaccountable mark upon this miſerable old creature: I examined and talked with her, and the reſt, as much and as long as I could, and gave the utmoſt attention I could; neither am I a man to ſuffer my judgment to be captivated by prepoſſeſſion; but upon the whole in my conſcience I ſhould ſooner have preſcribed them Hellebore than Hemlock. "Captiſ-" que res magis mentibus, quam conſceleratis ſimilis " viſa *." *i. e.* 'The thing ſeemed rather to be attri-' buted to madneſs than malice.' Juſtice has correction proper for ſuch maladies. As to the oppoſitions and arguments that I have met with from honeſt men both there and oft in other places, I have found none that have convinced me, and that have not admitted a more likely ſolution than their concluſions. It is true indeed, that as to proofs and reaſons that are founded upon experience and matter of fact, I do not unhinge them, neither have they any end. I often cut them, as Alexander did the Gordian knot. After all, 'tis ſetting a man's conjectures up at a very high price, to cauſe a man to be roaſted alive for them.

We are told by ſeveral examples (and particularly by Præſtantius † of his father) that being more drowned in

* Livius.

† After a fruitleſs ſearch to find out who were this Præſtantius and his father, I was informed by M. de la Monnoye whom nothing eſcapes. He referred me to the tract de Civitate Dei, lib. xviii. ch. 18. where St. Auſtin reports the facts as follows, viz. One Præſtantius ſaid, that his father having eaten ſome cheeſe in which there had been a ſpell, ſlept ſeveral days in his bed ſo ſound that none could awake him, till the lethargy going off, he told the viſions he had had, viz. That he was turned

in ſleep than men generally are, he fancied himſelf to be a beaſt of burthen, and that he ſerved the ſoldiers for a ſumpter-horſe; and what he fancied himſelf to be, he really proved. If witches dream ſo materially; if dreams can ſometimes ſo incorporate themſelves in the effects, I cannot believe that therefore our wills ſhould be accountable to juſtice; which I ſay, as a man, who am neither judge nor privy-counſellor; and who think myſelf by many degrees unworthy ſo to be, but a man of the common ſort born, and devoted to the obedience of the public reaſon, both in his words and actions. He that ſhould quote my whimſies to the prejudice of the moſt paltry law, opinion or cuſtom of his pariſh, would do himſelf a great deal of wrong, and me much more. For in what I ſay, I warrant no other certainty, but that it is what I had then in my thought. Confuſed and wavering thought. All I ſay is by way of diſcourſe, and nothing by way of advice. "Nec me pudet, ut iſtos, fateri neſcire, quod "neſciam *." i. e. 'Neither am I aſhamed, as they 'are, to confeſs my ignorance of what I do not know.' I ſhould not ſpeak ſo boldly, if it were my due to be believed. And ſo I told a great man, who complained of the tartneſs and contention of my exhortations. Perceiving you to be poſitive on one ſide of the queſtion, I propoſe to you the other, with all the care I can, to clear your judgment, not to bind it. God has your heart in his hands, and will furniſh you with the choice. I am not ſo preſumptuous as to deſire that my opinions ſhould bias you in a thing of ſo great importance. My fortune has not trained them up to ſuch potent

turned into a horſe, and that in this ſhape he had ſerved the ſoldiers for a ſumpter-horſe, which, ſays St. Auſtin, 'actually 'happened as he related it.' The holy father is of opinion, that in caſes of this ſort the devil preſents to the ſpectators a viſionary body which they take for a real animal, a horſe, an aſs, &c. and that the man who imagines himſelf to be that aſs or that horſe, thinks he carries a real burden, as much as it was poſſible for him to fancy it in a dream; ſo that if ſuch phantom of an animal carries real bodies, they are the dæmons who carry them in order to deceive men, who then ſee real bodies on the back of a ſumpter-horſe, which is a mere phantom.

* Cicero Tuſc. Qu. l. i. c. 25.

potent and ſublime concluſions. Truly I have not only a great many humours, but alſo a great many opinions, that I would endeavour to make my ſon diſlike, if I had one. Why? Even the trueſt are not always the moſt commodious to man, he is of ſo wild a compoſition.

Whether it be to the purpoſe, or not, it is no great matter. It is a common proverb in Italy, 'That he 'knows not all the pleaſures of Venus to perfection, 'who has never lain with a cripple.' Fortune, or ſome particular accident, has long ago put this ſaying into the mouths of the people; and the ſame is ſaid of the men as well as of women; for the queen of the Amazons anſwered a Scythian who courted her to love, ἄριστα χωλὸς οἴφει, 'Lame men perform beſt.' In that feminine republic, to evade the dominion of the males, they lamed them in their infancy, in their arms, legs, and the other joints that gave them advantage over the females, and only made uſe of them in that affair wherein we in theſe parts of the world make uſe of the ſex. I ſhould have been apt to think that the wriggling motion of the lame miſtreſs added ſome new pleaſure to the affair, and a certain titillation to thoſe who are engaged in it; but I have lately learnt, that ancient philoſophy has itſelf determined, which ſays, that the legs and thighs of lame perſons, not receiving, by reaſon of their imperfection, their due aliment, it falls out, that the genital parts above, are fuller, better ſupplied, and more vigorous. Or elſe, that this defect hindering exerciſe, they who ſuffer it are at a leſs expence of their ſpirits, and come more entire to the ſports of Venus; which alſo is the reaſon why the Greeks decried the women weavers, as being more hot than other women, by reaſon of the ſedentary occupation, which they have without any great exerciſe of the body. What is it we may not reaſon of at this rate? I might alſo ſay of theſe, that this jogging on their ſeats, whilſt they are at work, rouzes and provokes their deſire, as the ſwinging and jolting of their coaches does that of our ladies of quality.

Do not theſe examples ſerve to make good what I ſaid at firſt, that our reaſons often anticipate the effect,

fect, and have ſo infinite an extent of juriſdiction, that they judge and exerciſe themſelves, even in inanity and non-exiſtence? Beſides, the flexibility of our invention to forge reaſons for all ſorts of dreams, our imagination is equally facile to receive impreſſions of falſity, by very frivolous appearances. For by the ſole authority of the antient and common uſe of this proverb, I have formerly made myſelf believe, that I have had the more pleaſure with a woman by reaſon ſhe was not ſtrait, and accordingly reckoned that deformity amongſt her graces.

Torquato Taſſo *, in the compariſon he makes betwixt France and Italy, ſays, he has obſerved, that our legs are generally ſmaller than thoſe of the Italian gentlemen: and attributes the cauſe of it to our being continually on horſe-back. The very thing from which Suetonius † draws a concluſion that is directly oppoſite; for he ſays on the contrary, that Germanicus had made his legs bigger by the continuation of the ſame exerciſe. Nothing is ſo ſupple and wandering as our underſtanding. It is like the ſhoe of Theramenes, fit for all feet. It is double and various, as are alſo the ſubjects. 'Give me a dram-weight of 'ſilver,' ſaid a Cynic philoſopher to Antigonus; 'that 'is too little for a king to give,' replied he; 'Give 'me then a talent,' ſaid the other; 'and that,' ſaid the king, 'is too much for a Cynick to aſk ‖.

Seu plures calor ille vias, & cæca relaxat
Spiramenta, novas veniat qua ſuccus in herbas:
Seu durat magis, & venas aſtringit hiantes,
Ne tenues pluviæ, rapidive potentia ſolis
Acrior, aut Boreæ penetrabile frigus adurat ¶.

Virgil ſays, it is often proper to ſet fire to the fields, and to burn the uſeleſs ſtubble.

Whether the heat the gaping ground conſtrains,
New knits the ſurface, and new ſtrings the veins;
Leſt

* Paragone dell' Italia alla Francia, p. 11. † Suetonius in vita Caligulæ, § 3. ‖ Seneca de benef. lib. ii. c. 17. ¶ Virg. Geor. lib. i. v. 89, &c.

Leſt ſoaking ſhow'rs ſhould pierce her ſecret ſeat,
Or freezing Boreas chill her genial heat,
Or ſcorching Suns too violently beat.

"Ogni medaglia ha il ſuo reverſo*," i. e. 'Every 'medal has its reverſe.' This is the reaſon why Clitomachus ſaid of old, that Carneades had out-done the labours of Hercules, in having eradicated from the mind of man, its obſtinacy and raſhneſs of judging. This ſo ſtrong fancy of Carneades, ſprung, in my opinion, antiently from the impudence of thoſe who made profeſſion of knowledge, and their unbounded ſelf-conceit. Æſop was ſet to ſale with two other ſlaves; the buyer aſked the firſt 'what he could do;' who, to enhance his own value, promiſed mountains and miracles, ſaying, 'He could do this, and that, and I know 'not what;' the ſecond boaſted as much of himſelf and more: when it came to Æſop's turn, and that he was alſo aſked 'What he could do? Nothing, ſaid 'he, for theſe two have taken up all before me; they 'can do every thing.' So has it happened in the ſchool of philoſophy. The pride of thoſe who attributed a capacity for all things to human underſtanding, created in others, out of ſpite and emulation, this opinion, that it is capable of nothing. The one maintain the ſame extreme in ignorance as the others do in knowledge; ſo that it is undeniable, that man is immoderate throughout, and can never ſtop but from neceſſity, and the want of ability to proceed further.

CHAP. VII. *Of Phyſiognomy.*

ALMOST all the Opinions we have are derived from authority, and taken upon truſt; and it is not amiſs. We could not chuſe worſe than by ourſelves in ſo weak an age. The repreſentation of Socrates his diſcourſes, which his friends have tranſmitted to us, we approve upon no other account, but merely the reverence to public approbation. It is not according to our knowledge; they are not after our way. If any thing of this kind ſhould ſpring up now, few

* Cicero acad. quæſt. lib. iv. c. 34.

few men would value them. We diſcern not the beauties otherwiſe than by certain features, touched up, and illuſtrated by art. Such as glide on in their own genuine ſimplicity, eaſily eſcape ſo groſs a ſight as ours; they have a delicate and concealed beauty, and it requires the cleareſt ſight to diſcover ſo ſecret a light. Is not ſimplicity, in the ſenſe we accept it, couſin-german to folly, and a quality of reproach? Socrates makes his ſoul move by a natural and common motion. 'A 'peaſant ſaid this, a woman ſaid that;' he never has any thing in his mouth, but 'carters, joyners, coblers 'and maſons.' They are inductions and ſimilitudes drawn from the moſt common and known actions of men; every one underſtands them. We ſhould never have conceived the nobility and ſplendor of his admirable conceptions under ſo vile a form; we, I ſay, who think all things low and flat, that are not elevated by learning, and who diſcern no riches but in pomp and ſhow. This world of ours is only formed for oſtentation. Men are only puffed up with wind, and are bandied to and fro like tennis-balls. This man propoſed to himſelf no vain fancies; his deſign was to furniſh us with precepts and things that are really and moſt immediately of ſervice to life.

———*ſervare modum, finemque tenere,*
*Naturamque ſequi**.

To keep a mean, his end ſtill to obſerve,
And from the laws of nature ne'er to ſwerve.

He was alſo always one and the ſame, and raiſed himſelf not by ſtarts, but by conſtitution, to the higheſt pitch of vigour; or to ſay better, he exalted nothing, but rather brought down and reduced all aſperities and difficulties to their original and natural condition, and ſubjected their power: for in Cato 'tis moſt manifeſt, that this is a pace extended far above the common ways of men. In the brave exploits of his life, and in his death, we find him always mounted upon his managed horſes. Whereas this man always ſkims the ground,

* Lucan. lib. ii. v. 381, 382.

ground, and with a gentle and ordinary pace, delivers the moſt uſeful diſcourſes, and bears himſelf up thro' the moſt crabbed difficulties that could occur, in the courſe of human life even to death.

It has fallen out well, that the man moſt worthy to be known, and to be preſented to the world for example, is he of whom we have the moſt certain knowledge; for he has been pried into by the moſt clear-ſighted men that ever were. The teſtimonies we have of him are admirable, both for their number and credit. It is a great thing that he was able ſo to order the pure imaginations of a child, that without altering or wreſting them, he has thereby produced the moſt beautiful effects of a human ſoul. He preſents it neither elevated nor rich, he only repreſents it ſound, but certainly with a briſk and pure health. By theſe common and natural ſprings, by theſe vulgar and ordinary fancies, without being moved or provoked in the buſineſs, he drew up, not only the moſt regular, but the moſt high and vigorous beliefs, actions and manners that ever were. It was he who brought again from heaven, where ſhe loſt time, human wiſdom, to reſtore her to man, with whom her moſt juſt and greateſt buſineſs lies. See him plead before his judges, do but obſerve by what reaſons he rouzes his courage to the hazards of war; with what arguments he fortifies his patience againſt calumny, tyranny, death, and the perverſeneſs of his wife: you will find nothing in all this borrowed from art and the ſciences. The ſimpleſt may there diſcover their own means and power; it is not poſſible more to retire, or to creep more low. He has done human nature a great favour in ſhewing how much it can do itſelf.

We are all of us richer than we think we are; but we are taught to borrow and to beg, and brought up more to make uſe of what is another's than our own. Man can in nothing ſet bounds to his neceſſity. Of pleaſure, wealth and power, he graſps at more than he can hold; his greedineſs is incapable of moderation. And I find, that in a curioſity of knowing he is the ſame; he cuts himſelf out more work than he can do, and more than he needs to do: extending the utility of

knowledge as far as the matter. "Ut omnium rerum, "ſic li erarum quoque, intemperantia laboramus *." *i. e.* 'As of every thing elſe, we are alſo intemperate in the 'purſuit of learning.' And Tacitus had reaſon to commend the mother † of Agricola, for having reſtrained her ſon in his too violent appetite for learning.

It is a good, if duly conſidered, which has in it, as the other goods of men have, a great deal of vanity, and of proper and natural weakneſs, and which coſts very dear; the acquiſition of it is more hazardous, than that of all other ſuſtenance. For in other things, what we have bought, we carry home in ſome veſſel, and there have liberty to examine the worth of it, how much and at what time we ſhall take it; but the ſciences we can beſtow into no other veſſel than the ſoul; we ſwallow them in buying, and return from the market, either already infected, or amended. There are ſuch ſorts as only burthen and clog us inſtead of nouriſhing; and moreover, ſome that, under colour of curing, poiſon us. I have been pleaſed, in places where I have been, to ſee men, through devotion, make a vow of ignorance as well as chaſtity, poverty and penitence. It is as it were a gelding of our unruly appetites, to blunt this curioſity that ſpurs us on to the ſtudy of books; and to deprive the ſoul of this voluptuous complacency, that tickles us through our opinion of knowledge. And it is plenarily to accompliſh the vow of poverty to add unto it that alſo of the mind. We need not be taught to live at our eaſe. And Socrates tells us, that the way how to attain to it, and the manner how to uſe it, are in our power. All this ſufficiency of ours, which exceeds the natural, is little better than ſuperfluous and vain. It is much if it does not more cumber and plague us than do us good. "Paucis opus eſt literis ad mentem bonam ‖." *i. e.* 'A man of a good diſpoſition, has little need of learn-'ing.' It it a feveriſh exceſs of the mind; a turbulent and reſtleſs tool. Do but look into yourſelf, and you will find there ſuch natural arguments againſt death, as are true, and the moſt proper to ſerve you in neceſſity.

* Senec. epiſt. 106. † Tacit. in the life of Jul. Agricola, § 4. ‖ Senec. epiſt. 106.

neceſſity. They are ſuch as make a peaſant, and an intire people, die with as much conſtancy as a philoſopher. Should I have died leſs chearfully before I had read Cicero's Tuſculanes? I believe not. And when I conſider ſeriouſly, I perceive that my language is enriched indeed, but my courage little or nothing. It is juſt as nature forged it, and in any conflict, only defends itſelf in a natural and ordinary way. Books have not ſo much ſerved me for inſtruction as for exerciſe. What if learning, trying to arm us with new defences againſt natural inconveniencies, has more imprinted in our fancies the weight and greatneſs of them, than its reaſons and ſubtilties to ſecure us from them? They are ſubtilties indeed, with which it oft alarms us to little purpoſe. Do but obſerve, how many frivolous, and, if nearly examined, how many immaterial arguments the moſt conciſe and the wiſeſt authors ſcatter about one good one. They are no other than quirks to deceive us. But foraſmuch as this may be with ſome profit, I will ſift them no further. Enough of that ſort are diſperſed up and down, either by borrowing, or by imitation: therefore ought a man to take a little heed, not to call that force which is only civility, nor that ſolid which is only ſharp, or that good which is only fair. "Quæ magis guſtata quam potata "delectant*:" *i. e.* 'Which more delight the palate 'than the ſtomach.' 'Every thing that flatters does 'not feed.' "Ubi non ingenii, ſed animi negotium "agitur†." *i. e.* 'Where the queſtion is not about 'improving the wit, but the underſtanding.'

To ſee the buſtle that Seneca makes to fortify himſelf againſt death, to ſee him ſo ſweat and pant to harden and encourage himſelf, and bait ſo long upon this perch, would have leſſened his reputation with me, had he not very bravely maintained it to the laſt. His ſo ardent and frequent agitations diſcover, that he was in himſelf hot and impetuous. "Magnus animus re-"miſſius loquitur, et ſecurius: non eſt alius ingenio, "alius animo color‖." *i. e.* 'A great courage ſpeaks 'more indifferently and more firmly. The mind and 'the heart are of the ſame livery.' He muſt be con-

* Thuſc. lib. v. c. 5. † Sen. epiſt. 75. ‖ Sen. epiſt. 114, 115.

vinced at his own expence. And he does in ſome ſort diſcover that he was hard preſſed by his enemy.

Plutarch's manner the more diſdainful, and the more lax it is, is, in my opinion, the more manly and perſuaſive; I am apt to believe, that his ſoul had more certain and more regular motions. The one being more ſharp, pricks and makes us ſtart, and more touches the ſoul; the other being more ſolid, informs, eſtabliſhes, and conſtantly ſupports us, and more touches the underſtanding. That extorts the judgment, this wins it. I have likewiſe ſeen other writings yet more reverenced than theſe, which in the repreſentation of the conflict they maintain againſt the temptations of the fleſh, depict them ſo ſharp, ſo powerful and invincible, that we ourſelves, who are of the dregs of the people, are as much to wonder at the ſtrangeneſs and unknown force of their temptation, as at their reſiſtance.

To what end do we ſo arm ourſelves with theſe maxims of philoſophy? Let us look down upon the poor people that we ſee ſcattered upon the face of the earth, wholly intent upon their buſineſs, that neither know Ariſtotle nor Cato, example nor precept. Even from theſe does nature every day extract effects of conſtancy and patience, more pure and manly, than thoſe we ſo diligently ſtudy in the ſchools. How many do I ordinarily ſee, who ſlight poverty? How many that deſire to die, or that do it without alarm or affliction? He that is now digging in my garden, has this morning buried his father, or his ſon. The very names by which they call diſeaſes ſweeten and mollify the ſharpneſs of them. The phthiſick is with them but a cough, the bloody-flux but a looſeneſs, a pleuriſy but a ſtitch, and, as they gently name them, ſo they patiently endure them. They are grievous indeed, when they hinder their ordinary labour; and they never keep their beds but to die. "Simplex illa, et aperta "virtus in obſcuram, et ſolertem ſcientiam verſa eſt *." *i. e.* 'That plain and ſimple virtue is converted into an 'obſcure and cunning knowledge.'

I was

* Sen. epiſt 95.

I was writing this about the time when a heavy load of our inteſtine troubles lay with all its weight upon me for ſeveral months. I had the enemy at my door on one ſide, and the free-booters, worſe enemies than they, on the other; "Non armis ſed vitiis certatur." i. e. 'I 'was attacked not by force of arms, but fraud;' by which I was expoſed to all ſorts of military injuries at once.

Hoſtis adeſt dextrâ, lævaque ex parte timendus,
Vicinoque malo terret utrumque latus *.

On either hand an enemy alarms,
And threatens both ſides with deſtructive arms.

A monſtrous war! Other wars are bent againſt foreign nations, this againſt itſelf; and preys upon and deſtroys itſelf with its own poiſon. 'Tis of ſo malignant and ruinous a nature, that it ruins itſelf with the reſt; and with rage mangles and tears itſelf to pieces. We oftner ſee it waſte itſelf, than through ſcarcity of any neceſſaries, or by force of the enemy. All diſcipline ſhuns it. It comes to compoſe ſedition, and is itſelf full of it; aims to chaſtiſe diſobedience, and itſelf gives the example; and, while employed for the defence of the laws, ſhares in rebellion againſt its own. What a condition are we in! Our very phyſic is a plague.

Noſtre Mal s'empoiſonne
Du ſecours qu'on luy donne †.

Such is our fate, that our diſeaſe
Our remedies do ſtill increaſe.

—— *Exuperat magis, ægreſcitque medendo* §.

The phyſic makes us worſe, and ſicker ſtill.

Omnia fanda nefanda malo permiſta furore,
Juſtificam nobis mentem avertere Deorum ‖.

Right and wrong confounded in this war,
Have rob'd us of the gods protecting care.

In the beginning of ſuch popular maladies, a man may diſtinguiſh the ſound from the ſick; but when they come

* Ovid de Ponto. l. i. Eleg. 3. v. 57, 58. † Plutarch. § Virg. Æneid. lib. xii. ver. 46. ‖ Catullus Carm. 62. de nuptiis Pelei et Thetidis, v. 408.

come to continue, as ours have done, the whole body is then infected from head to foot, and no part is free from corruption. For there is no air that men ſo greedily ſuck in, that diffuſes itſelf ſo far, and that penetrates itſelf ſo deep, as that of licentiouſneſs. Our armies only ſubſiſt, and are kept together by the cement of foreigners; for of French there is now no conſtant and regular body of an army to be made. What a ſhame it is? there is ſcarce any diſcipline but what we learn from hired ſoldiers. As for our parts we conduct ourſelves not at the diſcretion of the chief*, but every one at his own; the general has a harder taſk to perform within than he has without: the commander alone is obliged to follow the ſoldiers, to make court to them, to comply with their humours, to obey them, and in every other regard there is nothing in the armies but diſſoluteneſs and licentiouſneſs. It pleaſes me to obſerve how much puſillanimity and cowardice there is in ambition; by how abject and ſervile ways it muſt arrive at its end; but withal, it diſpleaſes me to ſee good and courteous natures, and that are capable of juſtice, every day corrupted in the managery and command of this confuſion. Long toleration begets habit, habit conſent and imitation. We had ill-contrived ſouls enough, without ſpoiling thoſe that were good and generous; ſo that if we hold on, there will ſcarce remain any with whom to intruſt the weal of this ſtate of ours, in caſe fortune reſtore it to us.

Hunc ſaltem everſo juvenem ſuccurrere ſeclo,
Ne prohibete †.
Stay not the ſuccour which we all implore,
But let this Youth the ſinking age reſtore §.

What is become of the old precept, That ſoldiers ought more to ſtand in awe of their chief than of their enemy? And that wonderful example, That an orchard being enclоſed

* Here the ingenious Mr. Cotton quite miſtook the ſentiment of his author. † Virg. Geor. lib. i. v. 500. § If I am not miſtaken the perſon here meant by Montaigne is Henry of Bourbon, king of Navarre, who ſucceeded to the crown of France by the death of Henry III. not only ſaved the government, which he had aſſiſted in the life-time of that prince, but rendered it more flouriſhing and formidable, than it had been for a long time.

encloſed within the precincts of a camp of the Roman army, was at their decampment next day left entire to the owner, and not an apple, though ripe and delicious, pulled off? I could wiſh that our youth, inſtead of the time they ſpend in leſs uſeful travels, and leſs honourable ſtudies, would beſtow one half of that time in being eye-witneſſes of naval exploits under ſome good commander of Malta, and the other half in obſerving the diſcipline of the Turkiſh armies, which is very different from and has many advantages over ours. One thing is, that our ſoldiers are become more licentious in expeditions, whereas theirs are more temperate, and kept more in awe. The thefts and inſolences committed upon the common people, which are only puniſhed with the baſtinado in peace, are capital in war. For an egg taken in Turkey without paying for it, fifty blows with a cudgel is the ſettled rate; for any thing elſe, how trivial ſoever, not neceſſary to nouriſhment, they are impaled, or beheaded without delay. I am aſtoniſhed to read in the hiſtory of Selem, the moſt cruel conqueror that ever was, that when he ſubdued Egypt, the beautiful gardens about the city of Damaſcus being all open, (and a conquered land, where his army encamped upon the very place) were left untouched by the hands of the ſoldiers, becauſe they had not received the ſignal for plunder.

But is there any diſeaſe in a government ſo important, as ought to be phyſicked with ſuch a mortal drug? No, ſays Favonius, not ſo much as the tyrannical uſurpation of a commonwealth. Plato likewiſe does not conſent, that a man ſhould violate the peace of his country to cure it; and by no means approves of a reformation that diſturbs and hazards all, and that is purchaſed at the price of the ſubject's blood and ruin; determining it to be the duty of a good patriot, in ſuch a caſe, to let all alone, and only to pray to God for his extraordinary aſſiſtance; and the philoſopher ſeems to be angry with his great friend Bion, for having proceeded ſomething after another manner. I was a Platonick in this point, before I knew there had ever been a Plato in the world. And if this perſon ought abſolutely to be rejected from our ſociety; (he, who by the

the ſincerity of his conſcience, merited ſo much of the divine favour as to penetrate ſo far into the chriſtian light, through the univerſal darkneſs wherein the world was involved in his time,) I do not think it would well become us to ſuffer ourſelves to be inſtructed by a heathen, what a great impiety it is, not to expect from God relief that is ſimply his own, and without our co-operation. I often doubt, whether, among ſo many men as tamper in ſuch affairs, there is not to be found ſome one of ſo weak underſtanding, as to have been really perſuaded, that he went towards reformation by the worſt of deformations, and advanced towards his ſalvation, by the moſt expreſs cauſes which we know of moſt aſſured damnation; that by overthrowing government, magiſtracy, and the laws, in whoſe protection God has placed him, by inſpiring fraternal minds with hatred, and parricide, and by calling devils and furies to his aid, he can aſſiſt the ſacred lenity and juſtice of the divine law. Ambition, avarice, cruelty and revenge, have not ſufficient natural impetuoſity; though we gloſs them with the glorious titles of juſtice and devotion. There cannot a worſe ſtate of things be imagined, than where wickedneſs comes to be legitimate, and, with the magiſtrate's permiſſion, puts on the cloak of virtue. "Nihil in ſpeciem fallacius, quam prava "religio, ubi deorum numen prætenditur ſceleribus*." *i. e.* 'Nothing has a more deceiving face than a falſe 'religion, where wickedneſs is cloaked with the name 'of the gods.' The extremeſt ſort of injuſtice, according to Plato, is, when that which is unjuſt is reputed for juſt.

The common people at that time ſuffered thereby very much, not preſent damages only,

——undique totis
Uſque adeo turbatur agris †,——

So great is the diſturbance all over the country.

but future too. The living were to ſuffer, and ſo were they who were yet unborn. They were robbed, as I was conſequently, even of hopes; taking from them all they had, and robbed of the ſtore laid up to live on for many years. *Quæ*

* Tit. Livius, lib. xxxix. c. 16. † Virgil. Ecl. lib i. v. 11.

Quæ nequeunt ſecum ferre aut abducere, perdunt,
Et cremat inſontes turba ſceleſta caſas.
Muris nulla fides, ſqualent populatibus agri * :

What they can't carry off they ſpoil and ſpurn,
And the rude rabble harmleſs houſes burn;
Walls can't ſecure their maſters, and the field
Thro' woeful waſte does a vile proſpect yield.

Beſides this ſhock I ſuffered others. I underwent the inconveniencies that moderation brings along with it in ſuch diſeaſes. I was pilled on all hands, to the gibelin I was a guelph, and to the guelph a gibelin; ſome one of the poets in my ſtudy expreſſes this very well, but I know not where it is. The ſituation of my houſe, and my acquaintance with my neighbours, preſented me with one face; my life and actions with another. They did not form accuſations againſt me, for they had no fault to find. I never break the laws, and who ever would have queſtioned me, would have done himſelf a greater prejudice than me. They were only ſuſpicions that were whiſpered about, which never want appearance in ſo confuſed a mixture, no more than envious or weak brains. I commonly myſelf lend a hand to the injurious preſumptions that fortune ſcatters abroad againſt me, by a way I have ever had of evading to juſtify, excuſe, and explain myſelf, conceiving that it were to refer my conſcience to arbitration, to plead in its behalf; "Perſpicuitas enim argumentatione ele-"vatur †. *i. e.* 'For the perſpicuity of the cauſe is 'clouded by argumentation.' And, as if every one ſaw as clearly into me as I do myſelf, inſtead of retiring from an accuſation, I advance to meet it, and rather aggravate it by ironical and ſcoffing confeſſion, if I do not totally deſpiſe it, as a thing not worth my anſwer. But ſuch as look upon this kind of behaviour of mine as too haughty a confidence, have as little kindneſs for me as they who interpret it to be the weakneſs of an indefenſible cauſe; namely, the great ones, towards whom want of ſubmiſſion is a very great fault; they being rude to all juſtice that knows and feels itſelf, and

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* Ovid. Tri. lib. iii. El. 10. v. 65. † Cicero de Nat. Deorum, lib. iii. c. 4.

is not ſubmiſſive, humble and ſuppliant. I have oft knocked my head againſt this pillar. So it is, that at what then befel me an ambitious man would have hanged himſelf, and a covetous one would have done the ſame. I have no manner of care of getting.

Sit mihi, quod nunc eſt, etiam minus, ut mihi vivam
Quod ſupereſt ævi, ſi quid ſupereſſe volunt Di *.

I only pray, that, that ſmall eſtate which I
Now have, may tarry with me till I die,
And thoſe few days which I have yet to live
(If heav'n to me more days will pleaſe to give),
I may enjoy myſelf.

But the loſſes that have befallen me by the injury of others, whether by theft or violence, go as near to my heart almoſt, as they would do to that of a man that was ſick and tortured with avarice. The offence is, without compariſon, more bitter than the loſs. A thouſand ſeveral ſorts of miſchiefs fell upon me one after another, which I could better have borne all at once.

I have already been conſidering to whom amongſt my friends I might commit a helpleſs and decrepid old age; and having turned my eyes quite round, I found myſelf deſtitute. When a man falls at once from ſo great a height, it ought to be in the arms of a ſolid, vigorous and fortunate friendſhip. Such are very rare, if there be any. At laſt I concluded that it was ſafeſt for me to truſt to myſelf in my greateſt neceſſity; and if it ſhould ſo fall out, that I ſhould be put upon cold terms in fortune's favour, I ſhould the more ſtrenuouſly recommend myſelf to my own, and look the better to myſelf. Men on all occaſions throw themſelves upon foreign aſſiſtances to ſpare their own, which are the only certain and ſufficient aids they can arm themſelves with. Every one runs elſewhere, and to the future, foraſmuch as no one is arrived at himſelf. And I was ſatisfied, that they were profitable incoveniencies, foraſmuch as in the firſt place ill ſcholars are to be admoniſhed with the rod, when reaſon will not do, as a crooked piece of wood is made ſtrait by fire and ſtraining. I have a great while preached to myſelf to ſtick

cloſe

* Hor. lib. i. Epiſt. 18. v. 107.

cloſe to my own concerns, and ſeparate myſelf from the affairs of others; yet I am ſtill turning my eyes aſide. A bow, a kind word, or look from a great perſon tempts me; of which God knows how little ſcarcity there is in theſe days, and what they ſignify. I moreover, without wrinkling my forehead, hearken to the perſuaſions offered me, to draw me into ſome place of traffick, and ſo gently refuſe it, as if I were half willing to be overcome. Now ſo untractable a ſpirit muſt be roughly treated; and this veſſel which thus chops and cleaves, and is ready to fall in pieces, muſt have the hoops forced down with good ſound ſtroaks of a mallet. Secondly, this accident ſerved me for exerciſe to prepare me for worſe, if I, who both by the favour of fortune, and by the condition of my manners, hoped to be the laſt, ſhould happen to be one of the firſt overtaken with this ſtorm; inſtructing myſelf betimes, to reſtrain my way of life, and fit it for a new ſtate. True liberty is to be able to do what a man will with himſelf. " Potentiſſimus eſt qui ſe habet in po-" teſtate *." *i. e.* 'He is moſt potent, who has himſelf 'in his own power.' In an ordinary and quiet time, a man is prepared for moderate and common accidents; but in the confuſion wherein we have been for theſe 30 years, every Frenchman, whether in particular or in general, ſees himſelf every hour upon the point of the total ruin of his fortune. By ſo much the more ought he to have his courage armed with the ſtrongeſt and moſt vigorous proviſion. We are obliged to fortune, that we do not live in an effeminate, idle and languiſhing age: Some, who could never have been ſo by other means, will be made famous by their misfortunes. As I ſeldom read in hiſtories the confuſions of other ſtates, without regret that I was not preſent, the better to conſider them, ſo does my curioſity make me in ſome ſort pleaſe myſelf with ſeeing with my own eyes this notable ſpectacle of our public death, its form and ſymptoms; and, ſince I could not retard it, am content to be deſtined to aſſiſt in it, and thereby to inſtruct myſelf. Thus do we manifeſtly covet to ſee, even in ſhadow, and the fables of theatres, the tragic repre-

* Senec. Ep. 75.

ſentations of human fortune. 'Tis not without compaſſion of what we hear; but we pleaſe ourſelves in having our reſentment rouzed by the rarity of ſuch lamentable events. Nothing tickles that does not pinch; and good hiſtorians ſkip over calm narrations, as a ſtagnant water and dead ſea, to be again upon the narrative of wars and ſeditions, which they know are moſt acceptable to the readers. I queſtion whether or no I can handſomely confeſs at how mean a purchaſe of repoſe and tranquillity, I have ſpent above half of my life in the ruin of my country. I am too patient of accidents that touch my property, and don't ſo much regard what they take from me, as what remains ſafe, both at home and abroad. There is comfort in eſcaping, one while one, another while another, of thoſe evils that are leveled at me too in the conſequence, but at preſent reach only to others about us; as alſo, that in matters of public intereſt, the more univerſally my affection is extended, the weaker it is. To which may be added, that it is but too true. "Tantum ex publi-"cis malis ſentimus, quantum ad privatas res perti-"nent." *i. e.* 'We are only ſo far ſenſible of public 'evils, as they reſpect our private affairs.' And that the health which we have loſt was ſuch, that itſelf is ſome comfort for the regret we ought to have. It was health, but not ſo much in compariſon with the ſickneſs that has ſucceeded it. We are not fallen from any great height. The corruption and thievery which are in dignity and office, ſeem to me more inſupportable. We don't take it ſo ill to be rifled in a wood as in a place of ſecurity. It was an univerſal juncture of particular members, corrupted in ſpite of one another, and the moſt of them with inveterate ulcers, that neither required nor admitted any cure. This ſhock therefore did really more animate than preſs me, by the aſſiſtance of my conſcience, which was not only at peace within itſelf, but elevated, and I did not find any reaſon to complain of myſelf. Alſo, as God never ſends evils any more than goods, abſolutely unmixed, my health continued at that time longer than uſual; and, as I can do nothing without it, there are few things that I cannot do with it. It afforded me means to rouze up

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all my faculties, and to lay my hand before the wound that would elſe perhaps have ſpread farther, and in my patience, I experienced, that I had made a ſtand againſt fortune; and that it muſt be a great ſhock could throw me out of the ſaddle. I do not ſay this to provoke her to attack me with more vigour; I am her humble ſervant, and beg her pardon. Let her be ſatisfied in God's name. Am I not ſenſible of her aſſaults? Yes, certainly I am. But, as thoſe who are poſſeſt and oppreſſed with ſorrow, may ſuffer themſelves nevertheleſs by intervals to taſte a little pleaſure, and are ſometimes ſeen to ſmile; ſo have I ſo much power over myſelf, as to make my ordinary condition quiet, and free from anxious thoughts; but I ſuffer myſelf however, by fits, to be ſurprized with the ſtrings of thoſe unpleaſing imaginations that aſſault me, whilſt I am arming myſelf to drive them away, or at leaſt to wreſtle with them.

But the worſt evil which befel me after all was this; I was both without doors and within aſſaulted with a violent plague beyond all others: for, as ſound conſtitutions are ſubject to the moſt grievous maladies, foraſmuch as they are not to be forced but by ſuch, ſo my very healthful air, where no contagion, tho' very near, in the memory of man, could ever take footing, happening to be corrupted, produced ſtrange effects.

Miſta ſenum, et juvenum denſantur funera, nullum
Sæva caput Proſerpina fugit *.

Both age and youth promiſcuous crowd the tomb,
No mortal head can ſhun th'impending doom.

I had this pleaſant condition to mortify me, that the ſight of my houſe was frightful to me. Whatever I had there was without guard, and abandoned to the mercy of every one. I, who am of ſo hoſpitable a nature, was myſelf in very great diſtreſs for a retreat for my family; a diſtracted family, frightful both to its friends and itſelf, and filling every place with horror where it attempted to ſettle; being to ſhift its abode as ſoon as any one's finger began but to ach. All diſeaſes are at ſuch a time concluded to be the plague, and people do

* Horace, lib. i. Ode 28. v. 19.

not give themſelves leiſure to examine them. And the beſt on't is, that, according to the rules of art, in every danger that a man comes near, he muſt undergo a quarantine, in extreme dread of ſuch diſtemper; your imagination all that while tormenting you at pleaſure, and turning your health itſelf into a fever; yet would not all this have gone very near to my heart, had I not ſympathiſed with others ſufferings, and been forced to ſerve ſix wretched months together as a guide to this caravan: for I carry my antidotes within myſelf, which are reſolution and patience. The apprehenſion, which is particularly dreaded in this diſeaſe, does little trouble me. And if, I had choſe to have caught it when alone, my flight had been more ſprightly and farther off. 'Tis a kind of death, which I do not think of the worſt ſort; 'tis uſually ſhort, ſtupid, without pain, and conſolated by the conſideration that 'tis the lot of the public; a death without ceremony, without mourning, and without a crowd. But as to the people about us, the hundredth part of them could not be ſaved.

——*videas deſertaque regna*
Paſtorum, et longe ſaltus lateque vacantes *.

Deſerted realms now may'ſt thou ſee of ſwains,
And every where forſaken groves and plains.

In this place my beſt revenue is manual. What an hundred men plowed for me lay a long time fallow.

But then what example of reſolution did we not ſee in the ſimplicity of all this people? Every one generally renounced all care of life. The grapes, the principal revenue of the country, were left hanging in cluſters upon the vines; every one indifferently preparing for, and expecting death, either to-night or to-morrow, with a countenance and voice ſo far from fear, as if they had contracted with death in this neceſſity, and that it had been an univerſal and inevitable ſentence. 'Tis always ſuch. But how few have the reſolution of dying? The diſtance and difference of a few hours, and the ſole conſideration of company, renders the apprehenſion of it various to us. Do but obſerve theſe, by reaſon that they die in the ſame month, children, young

* Virgil. Geor lib iii. v. 476.

young people and old, they are no longer aſtoniſhed at it, they lament no more. I ſaw ſome who were afraid of ſtaying behind, as in a dreadful ſolitude, and ſeldom obſerved any other anxiety amongſt them, than for their interment; they were troubled to ſee the dead bodies ſcattered about the fields at the mercy of beaſts, which preſently began to flock about them. How differing are the fancies of men! The Neorites, a nation ſubjected by Alexander, threw the bodies of their dead into the darkeſt parts of their woods, to be devoured there; accounting that the only happy ſepulture. Some, while they were in health, digged their own graves, and others laid them down in them whilſt alive; and a labourer of mine, in dying, with his hands and feet drew the earth upon him. Was not this tucking himſelf up to ſleep at his eaſe? A bravery, in ſome ſort, like that of the Roman ſoldiers, who after the battle of Cannæ, were found ſuffocated with their heads thruſt into holes in the earth, which they had made with their own hands. In ſhort, a whole nation by uſance was brought to a diſcipline nothing inferior in ſturdineſs to any ſtudied and premeditated reſolution.

Moſt of the inſtructions of ſcience, to encourage us, have in them more of ſhew than of force, and of ornament than profit. We have abandoned nature, and will teach her what to do; her who did ſo happily and ſo ſecurely conduct us. And in the mean time, from the foot-ſteps of her inſtructions, and that little, which by the benefit of ignorance, remains of her image imprinted in the life of this ruſtic rout of unpoliſhed men, ſcience is conſtrained every day to borrow, to ſet a pattern, for her diſciples, of conſtancy, tranquillity and innocence. 'Tis pretty to ſee, that theſe who are full of ſo much fine knowledge, ſhould imitate this fooliſh ſimplicity, and that in the moſt principal acts of virtue; and that our wiſdom muſt learn, even from the beaſts, the moſt profitable inſtructions in the greateſt and moſt neceſſary concerns of human life: as, how we are to live and die, manage our fortunes, love and bring up our children, and to maintain juſtice. A ſingular teſtimony of human infirmity, and that this reaſon we ſo

handle at our pleaſure, finding evermore ſome diverſity and novelty, leaves with us no apparent trace of nature. Men have made ſuch uſe of it, as perfumers do of oil; they have ſophiſticated it with ſo many argumentations and far-fetched diſcourſes, that it is thereby become variable, and particular to every one of them, and has loſt its proper, conſtant and univerſal face. And we muſt ſeek evidence of it from beaſts, not ſubject to favour corruption, nor diverſity of opinions. For it is indeed true, that even they themſelves do not always go exactly in the path of nature, but where they ſwerve from it, 'tis ſo little, that you may always ſee the track; as horſes that are led make ſeveral bounds and curvetts, but 'tis always at the length of the halter, and they ſtill follow him that leads them; and as a hawk takes his flight, but ſtill under the reſtraint of his cryance. "Exilia, tormenta, "bella, morbos, naufragia meditare, ut nullo ſis ma- "lo tyro *. *i. e.* 'Expect baniſhments, tortures, wars, 'diſeaſes and ſhipwrecks, that thou may'ſt not be ſur- 'prized by any diſaſter.' What good will this curioſity do us, to anticipate all the inconveniencies of human nature, and to prepare ourſelves, with ſo much trouble, to meet even things which peradventure will never befal us? ("Parem paſſis triſtitiam facit, pati "poſſe †." *i. e.* 'It troubles men as much that they 'may poſſibly ſuffer, as if they really did.' Not only the blow, but the crack of the whip ſtrikes us. Or like people in a fever, for 'tis certainly a fever, to go immediately and ſcourge yourſelf, becauſe it may fall out, that fortune may one day make you undergo the laſh; and to put on your furred gown at midſummer, becauſe you will ſtand in need of it at chriſtmas? Throw yourſelves, ſay they, into the experience of all the evils, nay, the worſt that can poſſibly befall you; make the tryal and there ſtand faſt. On the contrary, the moſt eaſy, and moſt natural way would be to baniſh even the thoughts of them. They will not come ſoon enough, their true exiſtence does not continue with us long enough we

* Sen. Epiſt. 91. et. 107. † Sen. Epiſt. 74.

we muſt lengthen and extend them in thought; we muſt incorporate them in us before-hand, and there entertain them, as if they would not otherwiſe make a reaſonable impreſſion upon our ſenſes. We ſhall find them heavy enough when they come, (ſays one of the leaders, not one of the tender, but of the moſt ſevere ſects) in the mean time favour thyſelf, believe what pleaſes thee beſt *. What good will it do thee to beſpeak and anticipate thy ill fortune, to loſe the preſent for fear of the future; and to make thyſelf at this inſtant miſerable, becauſe thou art to be ſo in time? Theſe are his words. Learning indeed readily does us one good office, in inſtructing us exactly in the dimenſion of evils.

Curis acuens mortalia corda †.

Whetting human minds with needful care.

'Twere pity that any part of their bulk ſhould eſcape our ſenſe and knowledge.

It is certain, that, for the moſt part, preparation for death has adminiſtred more torment than the thing itſelf. It was of old truly ſaid, and by a very judicious author, "Minus afficit ſenſus fatigatio, quam cogita-"tio ‖." *i. e.* 'Suffering itſelf does leſs afflict the 'ſenſes, than the apprehenſion of ſuffering.' The thought of preſent death does ſometimes of itſelf animate us with a prompt reſolution no longer to ſhun a thing that is utterly inevitable. Several gladiators have been known formerly, who, after having fought timorouſly, have courageouſly entertained death, offering their throats to the enemy's ſword, and bidding them diſpatch. The remote ſight of future death requires a courage that is ſlow, and conſequently hard to attain to. If you know not how to die, never trouble yourſelf; nature will fully inſtruct you upon the ſpot; ſhe will exactly do that buſineſs for you, take you no care:

Incertam

* Seneca ep. 13. & 98.
† Virgil. Geo. l. b. i. v. 123.
‖ Seneca.

Incertam fruſtra mortales funeris horam
Quæritis, et qua ſit mors aditura via:
Pœna minor certam ſubito perferre ruinam,
Quod timeas, gravius ſuſtinuiſſe diu *.

Mortals, in vain's your curioſity
To know the hour and death that you muſt die;
Better your fate ſtrike with a ſudden blow,
Than that you long ſhould what you fear foreknow.

We trouble life by the care of death, and death by the care of life. The one vexes, the other frights us. It is not againſt death that we prepare, that is too momentary a thing; a quarter of an hour's ſuffering, without conſequence and without nuiſance, does not deſerve particular precepts. To ſay truth, we prepare ourſelves againſt the preparations of death. Philoſophy enjoins, that we ſhould always have death before our eyes, to foreſee and conſider it before the time; and then gives us rules and precautions to provide that this foreſight and thought do us no harm: Juſt ſo do phyſicians, who throw us into diſeaſes, to the end they may have a ſubject for their drugs and their art. If we have not known how to live, it is injuſtice to teach us to die, and to make the end different from the reſt of the life. If we have known how to live conſiſtently and quietly, we ſhall know how to die ſo too. They may boaſt as much as they pleaſe, "Tota philoſophorum "vita, commentatio mortis eſt †." *i. e.* 'That the 'whole life of a philoſopher is the meditation of 'death.' But I fancy, that tho' it be the end, 'tis not the aim of life. It is its end, its extremity, but nevertheleſs not its object.

It ought to be itſelf its own aim and deſign; its true ſtudy is to order, govern, and ſuffer itſelf. In the number of many other offices, which the general and principal chapter of knowing how to live comprehends, is the article of knowing how to die; and did not our fears give it weight, one of the lighteſt too.

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* Propertius, lib. ii. eleg. 27. v. 1. 2.
† Cicero Tuſc. quæſt. lib. i. c. 30.

To judge of them by the utility, and by the naked truth, the leſſons of ſimplicity are not much inferior to thoſe which learning teaches to the contrary. Men are differing in ſentiment and force, we muſt lead them to their own good, according to their capacities, and by various ways:

Quo me cumque rapit tempeſtas, deferor hoſpes *.

For as the tempeſt drives, I ſhape my courſe.

I never ſaw any countryman of my neighbours, enter into the thought of what countenance and aſſurance he ſhould paſs over this laſt hour with; nature teaches him not to dream of death till he is dying; and then he does it with a better grace than Ariſtotle, upon whom death preſſes with a double weight, both of itſelf, and by ſo long a premeditation of it. Therefore it was the opinion of Cæſar, that the death which was the leaſt thought of beforehand, was the eaſieſt and the moſt happy. "Plus dolet quam neceſſe eſt, qui "ante dolet quam neceſſe eſt †." *i. e.* 'He grieves 'more than is neceſſary, who grieves before it is neceſ-'ſary.' The bitterneſs of this imagination ſprings from our curioſity. Thus do we ever hinder ourſelves, deſiring to anticipate and over-rule natural preſcriptions. It is only the learned doctors who dine worſt, when in the beſt health, and knit their brows at the image of death. The common ſort ſtand in need of no remedy or conſolation, but juſt in the ſhock, and when the blow comes; and think no more of the matter than juſt what they endure. Is it not then, as we ſay, that the ſtupidity and want of apprehenſion in the vulgar gives them this patience in preſent evils, and this profound thoughtleſſneſs of future ſiniſter accidents? Are their underſtandings, by being more groſs and dull, leſs to be penetrated and moved? If it be ſo, let us henceforth, for God's ſake, recommend ſtupidity, which ſo gently leads its diſciples to the laſt favour we are promiſed from learning.

We have no want of good maſters, who are interpreters of natural ſimplicity. Socrates ſhall be one: For,

* Hor. lib. i. epiſt. 1. ver. 15. † Senec. epiſt. 98.

For, as I remember, he ſpeaks ſomething to this purpoſe, to the judges who ſat upon his life. 'I am 'afraid (gentlemen,) that if I intreat you not to put 'me to death, I ſhall involve myſelf in the charge of 'my accuſers, which is, that I pretend to be wiſer 'than others, as having ſome more ſecret knowledge 'of things that are above and below us. I know very 'well, that I have neither been familiar nor acquainted 'with death, nor have ever ſeen any perſon that has 'tried its qualities, from whom to inform myſelf. Such 'as fear it pre-ſuppoſe they know it; as for my part, 'I neither know what it is, nor what is done in the 'other world. Death is peradventure, an indifferent 'thing: peradventure, a thing to be deſired. It is ne'verthelefs to be believed, if it be a tranſmigration 'from one place to another, that it is a bettering of 'one's condition, to go live with ſo many great perſons 'deceaſed, and to be exempt from having any more to 'do with unjuſt and corrupt judges: If it be an anni'hilation of our being, it is yet a bettering of one's 'condition, to enter into a long and peaceable night. 'We find nothing more ſweet in life than a quiet re'poſe, and a profound ſleep without dreams. The 'things that I know to be evil, ſuch as to offend one's 'neighbour, and to diſobey one's ſuperior, whether it 'be God or man, I carefully avoid: ſuch as I do not 'know whether they be good or evil, I cannot fear 'them. If I go hence to die, and leave you alive, 'the Gods only know whether it will go better either 'with you or me; wherefore, as to what concerns me, 'you may do as you ſhall think fit; but, according to 'my method of giving juſt and wholeſome advice, I do 'affirm, that you will do your conſciences more right 'to ſet me at liberty, unleſs you ſee further into my 'cauſe than I do myſelf. And judging according to 'my paſt actions, both public and private, according to 'my intentions, and according to the profit that ſo 'many of my fellow-citizens, both old and young, 'daily reap from my converſation, and the good I do to 'you all, you cannot duly acquit yourſelves towards my 'merit, but by ordering, that, my poverty conſidered,

'I ſhould

'I ſhould be maintained in the Prytaneum *, at the 'public expence; a thing that I have often known 'you with leſs reaſon grant to others. Do not impute 'it to obſtinacy or diſdain, that I do not, according 'to the cuſtom, ſupplicate, and endeavour to move 'you to compaſſion. I have both friends and kindred; 'not being (as Homer ſays) begotten of a block or of a 'ſtone, any more than others, that are able to preſent 'themſelves before you in tears and mourning, and I 'have three deſolate children to move you to pity. 'But I ſhould do a ſhame to your city, at the age I 'am, and in the reputation of wiſdom wherein I now 'ſtand, to appear in ſuch an abject form. What would 'men ſay of the other Athenians? I have always ad-'moniſhed thoſe who have frequented my lectures, not 'to redeem their lives by an indecent action: and in 'the wars of my country, at Amphipolis, Potidæa, 'Delia, and other expeditions where I have been, I 'have effectually manifeſted how far I was from ſe-'curing my ſafety by my ſhame. I ſhould moreover 'endanger your duty, and ſhould tempt you to un-'handſome things: for it is not for my prayers to per-'ſuade you, but the pure and ſolid arguments of juſ-'tice. You have ſworn to the Gods to keep your-'ſelves thus upright, and it would ſeem as if I ſuſ-'pected, or would recriminate upon you, ſhould I not 'believe that there are Gods: and I ſhould give evi-'dence againſt myſelf, not to believe in them as I 'ought, by miſtruſting their conduct, and not purely 'committing my affair into their hands. I do entirely 'rely upon them, and hold myſelf aſſured, they will 'do in this what ſhall be moſt fit both for you and me. 'Good men, whether living or dead, have no reaſon 'to fear the Gods.'

Was this a childiſh pleading of a ſublimity inconceiveable, and was it unneceſſary? Truly, he had very good reaſon to prefer it to that which the greater orator Lyſias had penned for him; admirably couched indeed in the judiciary ſtyle, but unworthy of ſo noble a criminal. Did one ſuppliant word fall from the mouth of Socrates? Did that tranſcendent virtue ſtrike ſail in the

* The publick exchequer.

the height of its glory? And did his rich and powerful nature commit his defence to art, and, in his higheſt attempt did he renounce truth and ſimplicity, the ornaments of his ſpeaking, to deck it with the embelliſhments of figures, and the equivocations of a premeditated ſpeech? He did very wiſely, and like himſelf, not to corrupt the tenour of an incorrupt life, and to deface ſo ſacred an image of the human form, for the ſake of ſpinning out his decrepitude, to one year longer, and to betray the immortal memory of that glorious end. He lived not to himſelf, but for an example to the world. Would it not have been a public damage, that he ſhould have ended his life after a lazy and obſcure manner? Doubtleſs, that careleſs and indifferent concern of his about death, very well deſerved that poſterity ſhould have the more concern for it, which they alſo had. And there is nothing ſo juſt in juſtice, as what fortune ordained for his recommendation. For the Athenians abominated all thoſe who had been the cauſe of his death to ſuch a degree *, that they avoided them as excommunicated perſons, and looked upon every thing as polluted, that had been but touched by them; no one would waſh with them in the baths; none would ſalute, or own acquaintance with them; ſo that at laſt, unable longer to ſupport this public hatred, they hanged themſelves. If any one ſhould think, that amongſt ſo many other examples that I had to chuſe out of the ſayings of Socrates, for my preſent purpoſe, I have made an ill choice of this, and judge that this diſcourſe is elevated above the common opinion, I muſt tell them that I have purpoſely done it; for I am of another opinion, and think it to be a diſcourſe in rank and ſimplicity much behind and inferior to what it is commonly taken for. He repreſents with an inartificial boldneſs, and a childiſh ſecurity, the pure and firſt impreſſion and ignorance of nature. For it is to be believed, that we have naturally a fear of pain, but not of death, for its own ſake.

It is a part of our being, and no leſs eſſential than living. To what end ſhould nature have begot in us a hatred

* All this is exactly copied from Plutarch's treatiſe 'Of envy and hatred.'

hatred to it, and a horror of it, conſidering that it is of ſo great utility to her in maintaining the ſucceſſion and viciſſitude of her works? and that, in this univerſal republic, it ſerves more to birth and augmentation, than to deſtruction or ruin.

——*ſic rerum ſumma novatur* *,
Mille animas una necata dedit †.

The failing of one life, is the paſſage to a thouſand other lives: nature has imprinted in beaſts the care of themſelves, and of their preſervation. Nay, they proceed ſo far, as to fear the being worſe, to avoid hitting or hurting themſelves, and to be afraid of our haltering and beating them; accidents which are ſubject to their ſenſe and experience; but that we ſhould kill them they cannot fear, nor have they the faculty to imagine and conclude ſuch a thing as death. Yea, it is ſaid, that we ſee them not only chearfully undergo it, horſes for the moſt part neighing, and ſwans ſinging when they die; nay, they moreover ſeek it at need, of which elephants have given many examples.

But beſides all this, is not the way of arguing which Socrates here makes uſe of, equally admirable, both for its ſimplicity and vehemence? Really, it is much more eaſy to ſpeak like Ariſtotle, and to live like Cæſar, than to ſpeak and live as Socrates did. There lies the extreme degree of perfection and difficulty. Art cannot reach it. Now, our faculties are not ſo trained up. We do not try, we do not know them, we inveſt ourſelves with thoſe of others, and let our own lie idle. As ſome one may ſay of me, that I have here only made a noſegay of foreign flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the thread that ties them.

In earneſt, I ſo far yield to the common opinion, that thoſe borrowed ornaments do accompany me, but

* Lucret lib. ii. v. 74. † I know not where Montaigne found theſe words, nor conſequently what they ſignify in the original; but Montaigne immediately ſubjoins the ſenſe he would have them bear.

I do not think that they totally cover and hide me; that is quite contrary to my deſign, who deſire to make a ſhow of nothing but what is my own, and what is my own by nature: and could I have been ſure of credit, I had at all adventures ſpoken purely alone. I more and more load myſelf every day beyond my purpoſe and firſt method, upon the account of idleneſs and the humour of the age. If it miſbecomes me, as I believe it does, it is no matter, it may be of uſe to ſome other. Some quote Plato and Homer, who never ſaw either of them: and I alſo have taken paſſages far enough from their ſource. Having a thouſand volumes about me in the place where I write, I can preſently without trouble or learning borrow, if I pleaſe, from a dozen ſuch ſcrap-gatherers as I am, authors that I do not much trouble myſelf withal, wherewith to embelliſh this treatiſe of Phyſiognomy. There needs no more, but a preliminary epiſtle of the German model, to ſtuff me with quotations, and we, by that means, go a begging for the liquoriſh glory, to cheat the ſilly world. Theſe lumber-pies of common places, wherewith ſo many furniſh their ſtudies, are of little uſe but to common ſubjects, and ſerve but for a ſhow, and not to direct us; a ridiculous fruit of learning, which Socrates does ſo pleaſantly diſcuſs againſt Euthydemus. I have ſeen books compoſed of matters that were never either ſtudied or underſtood; the authors committing to ſeveral of their learned friends, the examination of this and t'other matter to compile them; contenting themſelves for their ſhare to have projected the deſign, and by their induſtry to have bound up this faggot of unknown proviſion; the ink and paper at leaſt are theirs. This is to buy or borrow a book, and not to make one; 'tis to ſhew men, not that a man can make a book, but that, whereof they may be in doubt, he cannot make one. A preſident in my hearing boaſted, that he had heaped up two hundred and odd common places in one of his judgments: in telling this, he deprived himſelf of the honour that had been attributed to him. In my opinion, a puſillanimous and abſurd vanity for ſuch a ſubject, and ſuch a perſon. I do quite contrary; and amongſt ſo many borrowed things, am glad

glad if I can ſteal one, diſguiſing aud deforming it for ſome new ſervice. At the hazard of having it ſaid, that it is for want of underſtanding its natural uſe, I give it ſome particular dreſs with my own hand, to the end it may not be ſo abſolutely ſtrange. Theſe expoſe their thefts to view, and value themſelves upon them. And alſo they have more credit with the laws than with me. We naturaliſts think there is a great and incomparable preference in the honour of invention to that of quotation.

If I would have ſpoke by learning, I had ſpoke ſooner; I had writ in a time nearer to my ſtudies, when I had more wit, and a better memory; and would ſooner have truſted to the vigour of that age than this, if I had intended to have profeſſed writing. And what if this gracious favour which fortune has even now offered me upon the account of this work, had befallen me in ſuch a time of my life, inſtead of this, wherein it is equally deſirable to poſſeſs, and to loſe? Two of my acquaintance, great men in this faculty, have in my opinion, loſt half, in refuſing to publiſh at forty years old, and chuſing to ſtay till threeſcore. Maturity has its defects as well as verdure, and worſe; and old age is as unfit for this kind of buſineſs as for any other. He who commits his decrepit age to the preſs, is a fool, if he thinks to ſqueeze any thing out thence that does not repreſent him deformed with dotage and ſtupidity. Our underſtandings grow coſtive and thick as they grow old. I deliver my ignorance in pomp and plenty, and my learning ſcantily and poorly; the latter accidentally and acceſſorily, the former principally and expreſly; and write purpoſely of nothing but nothing, nor of any ſcience but that of inſcience. I have choſen a time, when my life, which I am to give an account of, lies wholly before me; what remains of it holds more of death. And of my death only, ſhould I then be as talkative as ſome are, I would moreover give notice at my departure.

Socrates was a perfect exemplar in all great qualities; I am vexed that he had ſo deformed a body as it is ſaid, and ſo unſuitable to the beauty of his

ſoul, himſelf being ſo amorous, and ſo captivated with beauty. Nature ſurely did him wrong. There is nothing more probable than a conformity and relation of the body to the ſoul. "Ipſi animi, magni refert, "quali in corpore locati ſint: multa enim e corpore "exiſtunt, quæ acuant mentem; multa quæ obtun-"dant*. *i. e.* 'It is of great conſequence in what 'bodies ſouls are placed, for many corporal qualities 'ſharpen the mind, and many others blunt it.' This ſpeaks of an unnatural uglineſs and deformity of limbs: but we call that ill-favouredneſs alſo, which is an unſeemlineſs at firſt ſight, being principally lodged in the face, and which diſtaſtes us by the complexion, a ſpot, a forbidding countenance, ſometimes from ſome inexplicable cauſe, where the limbs are nevertheleſs of good ſymmetry and perfect. The deformity that cloathed a very beautiful ſoul in Stephen la Bœtius, was of this predicament. This ſuperficial uglineſs, which nevertheleſs is always the moſt imperious, is of leaſt prejudice to the ſtate of the mind, and of little certainty in the opinion of men. The other, which by a more proper name, is called a more ſubſtantial deformity, ſtrikes deeper in. Not every ſhoe of gloſſy leather, but every ſhoe neatly made, ſhews the true ſhape of the foot within it.

Socrates ſaid of his deformity, that it denoted his ſoul to be as deformed, had he not corrected it by inſtruction; but, in ſaying ſo, I believe he did but jeſt, as his cuſtom was, and never ſo excellent a ſoul made a jeſt of itſelf. I cannot oft enough repeat how great an eſteem I have for beauty, that potent and advantageous quality. He called it a ſhort tyranny, and Plato, the privilege of nature. We have nothing that excels it in reputation; it has the firſt place in commerce of men; it preſents itſelf to meet us, ſeduces and prepoſſeſſes our judgment with great authority and wonderful impreſſion. Phryne had loſt her cauſe, in the hands of an excellent advocate, if, by rending her robe, ſhe had not corrupted her judges with the luſtre of her beauty †. And I find that Cyrus, Alexander

* Cicero Tuſc. lib. i. 33.

† Sextus Empiricus adverſus mathematicos, lib. xi. p. 65. Quintilian who reports the ſame

ander and Cæſar, the three maſters of the world, never neglected beauty in their greateſt affairs: no more did the firſt Scipio. The ſame word in Greek ſignifies beautiful and good, and the Holy Ghoſt oft calls thoſe good, whom he means beautiful. I ſhould willingly maintain the priority of things called good, according to the ſong, which Plato * calls a trivial one, taken out of ſome of the antient poets; viz. health, beauty and riches. Ariſtotle ſays, that the right of command appertains to the beautiful; and that when there are perſons whoſe beauty reſembles the images of the Gods, veneration is likewiſe due to them. When one aſked him † why people oftener and longer frequented the company of handſome perſons? 'The queſtion, ſaid 'he, is not to be aſked by any but one that is blind.' The moſt and the greateſt philoſophers paid for their ſchooling, and acquired wiſdom by the favour and mediation of their beauty. Not only in the men that ſerve me, but alſo in the beaſts, I conſider beauty as little ſhort of goodneſs.

And yet I fancy that the ſhape and make of a face, and thoſe lineaments by which men gueſs at our tempers, and our future fortunes, is a thing that is not very directly and ſimply to be ranked in the claſs of beauty and deformity, no more than every good ſmell and ſerenity of air promiſes health, nor than every fog and ſtink does infection in a time of peſtilence. Such as accuſe ladies of contradicting their beauty by their manners, are not always in the right; for, in a face which is none of the beſt, there may be an air of honeſty and fidelity: as, on the contrary, I have ſometimes ſeen betwixt two lovely eyes, certain menaces of a dangerous and malignant nature. There are ſome phyſiognomies, that are favourable, ſo that in a crowd of victorious enemies, you would preſently chuſe, amongſt men you never ſaw before, one rather than

ſame paſſage, aſcribes to Phryne the invention of this expedient, whereby ſhe gained the favour of her judges, inſtit. Orator. lib. ii. c. 15. but Athenæus gives the honour of gaining her cauſe to Hyperides. * Gorgias Plat. p. 309. † Diogenes Laert. in the life of Ariſtotle, lib. v, § 2.

another, to whom to ſurrender, and with whom to truſt your life, and yet not properly for the ſake of his beauty.

A man's countenance is but a ſlender ſecurity, and yet is ſomething to be regarded too: and if I were to laſh men, I would moſt ſeverely ſcourge the wicked ones, who belye and betray the promiſes that nature has planted in their foreheads. I ſhould with great ſeverity puniſh malice in a courteous aſpect. It ſeems as if there were ſome happy and ſome unhappy faces; and I believe there is ſome art in diſtinguiſhing affable from ſilly faces, ſuch as are ſtern from the rigid, the malicious from the penſive, the coy from the melancholic, and ſuch other bordering qualities. There are beauties which are not only haughty, but ſour; and others that are charming and alſo inſipid. To prognoſticate future adventures, is a thing that I ſhall leave undecided.

I have, for my own part, as I have ſaid elſewhere, ſimply and nakedly embraced this antient rule, 'That 'we ſhould not fail to follow nature, and that the ſo-'vereign precept is to conform ourſelves to her.' I have not, as Socrates did, corrected my natural temper by the force of reaſon, and have not in the leaſt moleſted my inclination by art. I go on in my old way; I contend not. My two principal parts live of their own accord in peace and good intelligence, and my nurſe's milk, thanks be to God, was tolerably wholeſome and in a good ſtate. Let me ſay this by the way, that I ſee a certain image of ſcholaſtic honeſty, almoſt only in uſe amongſt us, in greater eſteem than it is really worth; a ſlave to precepts, and fettered with hope and fear. I would have it ſuch, as that laws and religions ſhould not make, but perfect and authorize it, ſuch as has wherewithal to ſupport itſelf without help, ſuch as is rooted in us by the ſeed of univerſal reaſon, and imprinted in every man by nature. That reaſon which reclaimed Socrates from his vicious bent, rendered him obedient to the Gods, and the men of authority in his city; courageous in death, not becauſe his ſoul was immortal, but becauſe he is mortal. It is a doctrine

ruinous

ruinous to all government, and much more hurtful than ingenious and ſubtle, which perſuades the people, that a religious belief is alone ſufficient, and without morality, to ſatisfy the divine juſtice. Cuſtom demonſtrates to us a vaſt diſtinction betwixt devotion and conſcience. I have a tolerable aſpect, both in form and interpretation:

Quid dixi habere me? Imo habui, Chreme,*
Heu! tantum attriti corporis oſſa vides†.
Have, did I ſay? No, Chremes, I had once,
Of a worn body thou but ſee'ſt the bones.

and which makes a quite contrary appearance to that of Socrates.

It has oft befallen me, that upon the mere credit of my preſence, and my very aſpect, perſons who had no manner of knowledge of me, have put a very great confidence in me, whether in their own affairs or mine: and I have in foreign parts obtained favours ſingular and uncommon; but theſe two inſtances, are peradventure worth particular relation: a certain perſon deliberated to ſurprize my houſe and me in it; his artifice was, to come to my gate alone, and to be importunate to be let in: I knew him by name, and had reaſon to repoſe a confidence in him, as being my neighbour, and ſomething related to me. I cauſed the gate to be opened to him, as I do to every one, and in he came, quite frighted, his horſe panting, and all in a foam. He preſently entertained me with this flim-flam: 'That 'about half a league off, he had unluckily met with a 'certain enemy of his,' whom I alſo knew and had indeed heard of their quarrel; 'that this enemy had 'purſued him very hard; that he therefore fled to my 'gate for refuge; and that he was in great trouble for 'his followers, whom, he ſaid, he concluded to be all 'either dead or taken.' I innocently did my beſt to comfort, hearten and refreſh him. Preſently after, came four or five of his ſoldiers, who preſented themſelves in the ſame countenance and affright to get in too, and after them more, and ſtill more, very well mounted

* Terentii Heaut. Act. 1. Scen. 1. v. 43. † From whence Montaigne quoted this line I know not.

mounted and armed, to the number of five and twenty or thirty, pretending that they had the enemy at their heels. This myſtery began a little to awake my ſuſpicion. I was not ignorant what an age I lived in, how much my houſe might be envyed, and I had ſeveral examples of others of my acquaintance, who had met with ſuch ſort of gueſts. So it was, that knowing there was nothing to be got in having begun to do a courteſy, unleſs I went through with it, and as I could not diſengage myſelf from them without ſpoiling all; I choſe the moſt natural and ſimple way, as I always do, and invited them all to come in. And in truth, I am naturally very little inclined to ſuſpicion and diſtruſt. I willingly incline towards excuſe, and the moſt favourable conſtruction. I take men according to the common run, and don't believe there can be ſuch perverſe and unnatural inclinations, unleſs convinced by manifeſt evidence, more than I do monſters and miracles; I am moreover a man who willingly commit myſelf to fortune, and throw myſelf headlong into her arms; and have hither to found more reaſon to applaud, than to condemn myſelf for it; having found her more ſolicitions of, and more a friend to my affairs, than I am myſelf. There are ſome actions in my life, wherein my conduct may juſtly be called difficult, or, if you pleaſe, prudent. Yet of thoſe, ſuppoſing the third part to have been my own, doubtleſs the other two thirds were richly hers. We are, methinks, to blame, in that we do not enough truſt heaven with our affairs, and challenge more from our own conduct than appertains to us. And therefore it is that our deſigns ſo oft miſcarry. Heaven is diſpleaſed at the extent that we attribute to the prerogatives of human prudence in prejudice of its own, and abridges them the more we ſtretch them. The laſt comers kept themſelves on horſe-back in my court-yard, whilſt their leader was with me in the parlour, who would not have his horſe ſet up in the ſtable, ſaying, he would immediately retire, as ſoon as he ſhould have news of the reſt of his men. He ſaw himſelf maſter of his enterprize, and nothing now remained but the execution. He has ſince ſeveral times ſaid (for he was not aſhamed to tell

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the ſtory himſelf) that my countenance and freedom had ſnatched the treachery out of his hands. He again mounted his horſe, his followers having continually their eyes intent upon him, to ſee when he would give the ſign; very much aſtoniſhed to ſee him march away and leave his prey behind him. Another time, relying upon I know not what truce, newly publiſhed in the army, I took a journey through a very fickle country. I had not rid far, but it got wind, and two or three parties of horſe, from ſeveral places, were ſent out to take me; one of them the third day overtook me, where I was charged by fifteen or twenty gentlemen in vizors, followed at a diſtance by a band of ragamuffins. Here was I ſurrounded and taken, drawn into the heart of a neighbouring foreſt, diſmounted, robbed, my trunks rifled, my caſket taken, and my horſes and equipage divided amongſt new maſters. We had here a very long conteſt about my ranſom, which they ſet ſo high, that it was plain I was not known to them. They were moreover in a very great debate about my life; and in truth, there were ſeveral alarming circumſtances that threatened me with the danger I was then in.

Tunc animis opus, Æneas, tunc pectore firmo *.
Then, then, Æneas, was there need
Of an undaunted heart indeed.

I ſtill inſiſted upon the letter of the truce, that they ſhould only have the gain of what they had already taken from me, which was not to be deſpiſed, without promiſe of any other ranſom. After we had been two or three hours in this place, and after they had mounted me on a pitiful jade that was not likely to run away from them, and committed me to the guard of fifteen or twenty harquebuſſiers, and diſperſed my ſervants to others, having given order that they ſhould carry us off priſoners ſeveral ways; when I was got ſome two or three muſquet-ſhot from the place,

Jam prece Pollucis, jam Caſtoris implorata †;
Whilſt I implor'd Caſtor and Pollux aid *.

this

* Virgil. Æneid. lib. vi. v. 261. † Catullus, lib. xvi. v. 65.

this ſudden and unexpected alteration happened. I ſaw the chief of them return to me with milder language, making ſearch amongſt the troopers for my loſt baggage, and cauſing as much as could be recovered to be reſtored to me, even to my caſket: but the beſt preſent they made me was my liberty; for the reſt did not much concern me at that time. The true cauſe of ſo ſudden a change, and of this ſecond thought, without any apparent impulſe, and of ſo miraculous a repentance, at ſuch a time, in a ſerious and deliberate enterpriſe, and which was become juſt by cuſtom, (for at the firſt daſh I plainly confeſſed to them, of what party I was, and whither I was going) is what I do not yet rightly apprehend. The moſt eminent amongſt them, who pulled off his vizor, and told me his name, ſaid to me over and over again, that I was obliged for my deliverance to my countenance, and the frankneſs and courage of my ſpeech, which rendered me unworthy of ſuch a misfortune, and he deſired me to be in no dread of the like again. 'Tis poſſible that the divine bounty choſe to make uſe of this mean inſtrument for my preſervation. It moreover defended me the next day from other and worſe ambuſhes, which even theſe had given me warning of. The laſt of theſe two gentlemen is yet living, to give an account of the ſtory; the firſt was killed not long ago.

If my face did not anſwer for me, if men did not read in my eyes and words, the innocency of my intention, I had not lived ſo long without quarrels, and without giving offence, conſidering the indiſcreet liberty I take, right or wrong, to ſay whatever comes into my head, and to judge raſhly of things. This practice may with reaſon appear uncivil, and ill adapted to our way of converſation; but I have never met with any who have judged it outrageous or malicious, or that took offence at my liberty, if he had it from my own lips. Words repeated have another kind of ſenſe, as

* Or as Montaigne might have ſaid in his own language: After I had made a vow to all the ſaints in paradiſe, or as we proteſtants ſay, in the Romiſh calendar.

as well as ſound. Neither do I hate any perſon whatever; and am ſo ſlow to offend that I cannot do it, to ſerve reaſon itſelf. And when occaſion has called me to condemn criminals, I have rather failed in the ſtrictneſs of juſtice. "Ut magis peccari nolim, quam ſatis "animi ad vindicanda peccata habeam." 'So that I 'have more concern for mens offences, than a heart 'to puniſh them *.' Ariſtotle, 'tis ſaid, was reproached for having been too merciful to a wicked man †. I was indeed, ſaid he, merciful to the man, but not to his wickedneſs. Ordinary judgments are exaſperated to puniſhment by the horror of the crime; but this cools mine. The horror of the firſt murder makes me fear the ſecond, and the deformity of the firſt cruelty makes me abhor all imitation of it. That may be applied to me, who am but a knave of clubs, which was ſaid of Charillus, king of Sparta §, 'He cannot be 'good, becauſe he is not ſevere to the wicked. Or thus; for Plutarch delivers it both theſe ways, as he does a thouſand other things, variouſly, and contrary to one another. 'He muſt needs be good, becauſe he 'is ſo even to the wicked ‖.' Even as in lawful actions, I do not care to be concerned when others are offended by them; ſo to ſay the truth, in unlawful things, I do not make conſcience enough of employing myſelf when others approve them.

CHAP. VIII. *Of Experience.*

THERE is no deſire more natural than that of knowledge: we try all the ways that can lead us to it; where reaſon is wanting, we therein employ experience;

For

* Titus Livius lib. xxix. c. 22. † Diog. Laert. in the life of Ariſtotle, lib. v. § 17. § Plutarch of the difference betwixt the flatterer and the friend, c. 10. ‖ I cannot imagine from which of Plutarch's tracts Montaigne took this reflection; but in the treatiſe of Envy and Hatred, Plutarch gives it us exactly as it is in the preceding note, viz. How ſhould he be good, when he is not rigid to the wicked, c. 3.

Per varios uſus artem experientia fecit,
Exemplo monſtrante viam *.

By various proofs experience art has form'd,
Example being guide.

which is a means much more weak and cheap. But truth is ſo great a thing, that we ought not to diſdain any medium that will guide us to it. Reaſon has ſo many forms, that we know not which to adhere to; experience has no fewer. The conſequence we would draw from the compariſon of events is unſure, by reaſon they are always unlike. There is no quality ſo univerſal in this image of things as diverſity and variety. Both the Greeks, the Latins, and we, for the moſt expreſs example of ſimilitude, have pitched upon that of eggs. And yet there have been men, particularly one at Delphos, who could diſtinguiſh marks of difference amongſt eggs ſo well, that he never miſtook one for another; and having many hens, could tell which had laid it †. Diſſimilitude intrudes itſelf into our works; no art can arrive at a perfect ſimilitude. Neither Perozet, nor any other card-maker, can ſo carefully poliſh and blanch the backs of his cards, that ſome gameſters will not diſtinguiſh them by only ſeeing them ſhuffled by another: reſemblance does not ſo much make one, as difference makes another. Nature has obliged herſelf to make nothing like to another.

And yet I am not much pleaſed with his opinion, who thought by the multitude of laws to curb the authority of judges, by retrenching them. He was not aware that there is as much liberty and ſtretch in the interpretation of laws, as in their form; and they deceive themſelves, who think to leſſen and ſtop our debates by ſummoning us to the expreſs words of the bible: foraſmuch as human wit finds as large a field for controverting the ſenſe of another, as for delivering his own; and, as if there was leſs animoſity and bitterneſs in gloſſing than invention. We ſee how much he was deceived; for we have more laws in France, than in all the reſt of the world beſides; and more than would be neceſſary for the regulation of all the worlds

* Manilius, lib. i. v. 61. † Cicero Acad. Quæſt. lib. iv. c. 18.

worlds of Epicurus, " Ut olim flagitiis, ſic nunc Le-" gibus laboramus *:" ſo that as formerly ' we were ' plagued with vices, we are now ſick of the laws:' and yet we have left ſo much to the opinion and deciſion of our judges, that there never was ſo full and uncontrouled a liberty. What have our legiſlators got by culling out an hundred thouſand particular caſes, and facts, and by adding to thoſe, an hundred thouſand laws? This number holds no manner of proportion with the infinite diverſity of human actions; the multiplications of our invention will never reach the variety of examples. Add to them an hundred times as many more, yet it will never happen, that of events to come, any one will fall out, that, in the millions of events ſo choſen and recorded, ſhall ſo tally with any one, and be ſo exactly coupled and compared with it, that there will not remain ſome circumſtance and diverſity which will require a variation of judgment. There is little relation betwixt our actions that are in perpetual mutation, and the laws that are fixt and immoveable; the moſt to be deſired, are thoſe that are the moſt rare, the moſt ſimple, and general: and I am further of opinion, that we were better to have none at all, than to have them ſo numerous.

Nature always gives them better, than thoſe are which we make ourſelves; witneſs the picture of the poets Golden age, and the ſtate wherein we ſee nations live, who have no other. Some there are, who, for their only judge, take the firſt paſſer by that travels along their mountains, to determine their cauſe: and others, who, on their market-day, chuſe out ſome one amongſt them, who decides all their controverſies on the ſpot. What danger would there be, if the wiſeſt ſhould thus determine ours, according to occurrences, and by ſight, without obligation of example and conſequence? Every ſhoe to his own foot. When king Ferdinand ſent colonies to the Indies, he wiſely provided that they ſhould not carry along with them any ſtudents of the long robe, for fear leſt law-ſuits ſhould get footing in that new world; as being a ſcience in its own nature, the mother of altercation and diviſion; judging

* Tacit. lib. iii. c. 25.

with Plato, That lawyers and phyſicians are the peſts of a country *.

How comes it to paſs that our common language, ſo eaſy for all other uſes, becomes obſcure, and unintelligible in wills and contracts? And that he who ſo clearly expreſſes himſelf, whatever he ſpeaks or writes, cannot find in this any way of declaring himſelf which is not liable to doubt and contradiction? If it be not that the great men of this art, applying themſelves with a peculiar attention to cull out hard words, and form artful clauſes, have ſo weighed every ſyllable, and ſo thoroughly ſifted every ſort of connection, that they are now confounded and intangled in the infinity of figures, and ſo many minute diviſions, that they can no longer be liable to any rule or preſcription, nor any certain intelligence. "Confuſum eſt quicquid uſque "in pulverem ſectum eſt †. *i. e.* 'Whatever is beaten 'into powder is confuſed.' As you have ſeen children try to bring a maſs of quickſilver into a certain number of parts, the more they preſs and work it, and endeavour to reduce it to their own will, the more they irritate the liberty of this generous metal; it baffles their art, and ſubdivides and ſparkles itſelf into ſo many ſeparate bodies, as are innumerable; ſo it is here, for in ſubdividing their ſubtilties, men are taught to encreaſe their doubts, they are led into a way of ſtretching and diverſifying difficulties, which are lengthened and diſperſed. By ſtarting and ſplitting of queſtions, they make the world to fructify and abound in uncertainties and diſputes; as the earth is made fertile, the deeper 'tis ploughed and the more 'tis harrowed. "Difficul-"tatem facit doctrina §." *i. e.* 'Doctrine begets dif-'ficulty.' We doubted of Ulpian, and are now more perplexed with Bartolus and Baldus. We ſhould blot out the trace of this innumerable diverſity of opinions, not adorn ourſelves with it, and intoxicate poſterity with it. I know not what to ſay to it, but experience makes it manifeſt, that ſo many interpretations divide truth, and mar it. Ariſtotle writ to be underſtood, which if he could not be, much leſs will another that is

* De Republ. lib. iii. p. 621. † Sen. Epiſt. 79.

is not ſo good at it; and a third than he who expreſſed his own thoughts. We open the matter, and ſpill it in pouring out. Of one ſubject we make a thouſand, and in multiplying and ſubdividing them, relapſe into the infinity of the atoms of Epicurus. Never did two men make the ſame judgment of the ſame thing; and 'tis impoſſible to find two opinions exactly alike, not only in ſeveral men, but in the ſame men, at different times. I oft find matter of doubt, of things which the commentary diſdains to take notice of. I am moſt apt to ſtumble on even ground, like ſome horſes that I have known, which make moſt trips in the ſmootheſt way.

Who will not ſay that gloſſes augment doubts and ignorance, ſince there is no one book to be found, either human or divine, which the world buſies itſelf about, whoſe difficulties are cleared by interpretation. The hundredth commentator ſtill refers you to the next, more knotty and perplexed than he. When were we ever agreed amongſt ourſelves, that a book had enough, and that there was no more to be ſaid on the ſubject? This is moſt apparent in the law pleadings. We give the authority of law to infinite doctors, arrets ad infinitum, and to as many interpretations; yet do we find any end of the neceſſity of interpreting? Is there for all that any progreſs or advancement towards tranquillity; or do we ſtand in need of any fewer advocates and judges, than when this maſs of law was yet in its firſt infancy? We, on the contrary, obſcure and bury the ſenſe of it. We diſcover no more of it than what ſo many incloſures and barriers will permit. Men are not ſenſible of the natural diſeaſe of the mind. It does nothing but ferret and enquire, and is eternally wheeling, plodding and perplexing itſelf; and like the ſilk-worm, ſuffocates itſelf in its own web; or like "Mus in pice," *i. e.* 'A mouſe in a tar-barrel, which 'the more it ſtruggles to get out, is the more intang-'led.' It thinks it diſcovers at a great diſtance I know not what glimpſe of imaginary light and truth; but whilſt it runs to it, ſo many difficulties, hindrances, and new inquiſitions croſs its way, as miſlead and intoxicate it. Not much unlike Æſop's dog, that ſeeing ſomething like a dead body floating in the ſea, and

not being able to approach it, attempted to drink the water, in order to lay the paſſage dry, and ſo drowned itſelf. To which tallies, what one Crates * ſaid of the writings of Heraclitus, 'That they required a reader who could ſwim well, that the depth and weight 'of his doctrine might not overwhelm and choak him †.' 'Tis nothing but particular weakneſs that makes us content ourſelves with what others, or ourſelves have found out in this purſuit of knowledge; thoſe of better underſtanding would not reſt ſo content; there is always room and to ſpare for one to ſucceed, nay, even for ourſelves, and every one elſe; there is no end of our inquiries, our end is in the other world. 'Tis a ſign either of a contracted mind when it is ſatisfied, or that it is grown weary. No generous mind ſtops of itſelf; it always puſhes on, and beyond its power; it has ſallies beyond its compaſs. If it do not advance and preſs forward, and fall back, ruſh, turn and wheel about, 'tis but ſprightly by halves; its purſuits are without bound or method; its aliment is admiration, ambiguity the chace; which Apollo plainly declared, by always ſpeaking to us in a double, obſcure and oblique ſenſe; not feeding, but amuſing and puzzling us. 'Tis an irregular and perpetual motion, without example and without aim. It's inventions heat, purſue and introduce one another.

Ainſi voit-on en un ruiſſeau coulant,
Sans fin l'une eau, apres l'autre roulant;
Et tout de rang, d'un eternel conduit,
L'une fuit l'autre, & l'une l'autre fuit.
Par cette-cy, celle-là eſt pouſſée,
Et cette-cy par l'autre eſt devancee:
Touſiours l'eau va dans l'eau, & touſiours eſt-ce
Meſme ruiſſeau, & touſiours eau diverſe.

So in a running ſtream one wave we ſee
After another roul inceſſantly,
And, as they glide, each does ſucceſſively
Purſue the other, each the other fly:

By

* According to Diogenes Laert. lib. ii. § 22. This was not Cratis but Socrates, who ſaid of the writings of Heraclitus, that they had need of as excellent divers as any in the iſle of Delos.

† Suidas in Δηλίᾳ κολυμβητῆ.

By this that's evermore puſh'd on, and this
By that continually preceded is:
One water always does another fill,
Still the ſame brook, but diff'rent water ſtill.

There is more ado to interpret interpretations than things, and more books upon books than upon any other ſubject; we do nothing but comment upon one another. Every place ſwarms with commentaries; but of authors there is great ſcarcity. Is it not the principal and moſt reputed knowledge of our times to underſtand the learned? Is it not the common and final aim of all ſtudies? Our opinions are grafted upon one another; the firſt ſerves for a ſtock for the ſecond, the ſecond to the third, thus ſtep by ſtep we climb the ladder. From whence it comes to paſs, that he who is mounted higheſt has oft more honour than merit; for he is got up but a grain upon the ſhoulders of the laſt but one. How oft, and peradventure how fooliſhly, have I ſtretched my book to ſpeak of itſelf? Fooliſhly, if for no other reaſon but this, That I ought to call to mind what I ſay of others who do the ſame; That the fond looks they ſo oft caſt upon their works, witneſs that their hearts pant with ſelf-love, and that even the diſdainful reproaches wherewith they laſh them, are no other than the diſſembled careſſes of a maternal kindneſs; according to Ariſtotle, whoſe valuing and undervaluing himſelf, oft ſpring from the ſame air of arrogancy: I urge for my excuſe, that I ought in this to have more liberty than others, foraſmuch as I purpoſely treat of myſelf and of my writings, as I do of my other actions; but though my theme turn upon itſelf, I know not whether or no every one elſe will take ſuch liberty.

I have obſerved in Germany, that Luther has left as many and more diviſions and diſputes behind him, about the doubt of his opinions, than he himſelf raiſed about the holy ſcriptures. Our conteſt is verbal. I demand what nature is, what pleaſure, circle and ſubſtitution are? The queſtion is about words, and is anſwered in the ſame coin. A ſtone is a body, but if a man ſhould further urge, 'and what is a body?' ſubſtance;

'and what is substance?' and so on *, he would drive the respondent to the end of his dictionary. We exchange one word for onother, and often for one less understood. I better know what man is, than I know what animal is, or mortal, or rational. To satisfy one doubt, they give me ground for three; 'tis the Hydra's head. Socrates † asked Menon what virtue was; 'There is,' says Menon, 'the virtue of a man and of 'a woman, of a magistrate and of a private person, of 'an old man, and of a child. Very well, says Socrates, 'we are in quest of one virtue, and thou hast brought 'us a swarm; we put one question, and thou returnest 'a whole hive.' As no event, nor no form entirely resembles another, so there is not one that entirely differs from another; such is the ingenious mixture of nature. If our faces were not alike, we could not distinguish man from beast; if they were not unlike we could not distinguish one man from another. All things hold by some similitude, every example halts. And the relation which is drawn from experience is always faulty and imperfect; comparisons are always coupled at one end or other; so do the laws serve, and are fitted to every one of our affairs by some wrested, byassed and forced interpretation.

Since the moral laws, that concern the particular duty of every one in himself, are so hard to be taught and observed, as we see they are; 'tis no wonder if those which govern so many particulars, are much more so. Do but consider the form of this justice that governs us, 'tis a true testimony of human weakness, so full is it of error and contradiction. What we find to be favour and severity in justice, and we find so much of both, that I know not whether the medium is so often met with, are sickly parts, and unjust members of the very body and essence of justice. The country people come to bring me news, in great haste, that they just left, in a forest of mine, a man with an hundred wounds upon him, who was yet breathing, and begged of them water

* We need go no farther, than the English philosopher Locke, famous for his penetration, and the incomparable rectitude of his judgment, who has plainly shewn, that we have no clear, exact idea of what we call substance, lib. i. c. 4. § 10. and lib. ii. c. 23. § 2. &c. of his Essay on human understanding.

† Plato in Menone, p. 409.

water for pity's ſake, and help to raiſe him up; ſaying, they durſt not come near him, but ran away, leſt the officers of juſtice ſhould catch them there; and for fear, as it falls out with thoſe who are found near a murdered perſon, they ſhould be called in queſtion about this accident to their utter ruin, having neither money nor any means to defend their innocence. What ſhould I have ſaid to theſe people? It is certain that this office of humanity would have brought them into trouble.

How many innocents have we known that have been puniſhed even without the Judge's fault, and how many more are there that have not arrived at our knowledge? This caſe happened in my time. Certain men were condemned to die for a murder committed; and their ſentence, if not pronounced, was at leaſt determined and concluded on. The judges, juſt in the nick, are advertiſed by the officers of an inferior court hard by, that they have ſome men in cuſtody, who have directly confeſſed the ſaid murder, and give ſuch light into the fact, as is not to be doubted. It was then notwithſtanding put to the queſtion, whether or no they ought to ſuſpend execution of the ſentence already paſſed upon the former. They conſidered the novelty of the example, and the conſequence of ſtaying judgments, that the ſentence of death was duly paſſed, and the judges could not retract. To conclude, theſe poor devils were ſacrificed to the forms of law. Philip, or ſome other, provided againſt a like inconvenience, after this manner; he had condemned a man to pay a great fine to another, by a determined judgment. The truth ſome time after being diſcovered, it appeared that he had paſſed an unjuſt ſentence; on one ſide was the reaſon of the cauſe, on the other ſide the reaſon of the judiciary forms. He in ſome ſort ſatisfied both, leaving the ſentence in the ſtate it was, and out of his own purſe paying the coſts of the condemned party. But he had to do in a reparable affair, mine were irreparably hanged. How many ſentences have I ſeen more criminal than the crimes?

All this makes me remember the antient opinions, 'That there is a neceſſity a man muſt do wrong by 'retail,

'retail, who will do right in the groſs; and injuſtice 'in little things, that will have it in his power to do 'juſtice in great: that human juſtice is formed after 'the model of phyſic,' according to which, all that is *utile*, is alſo juſt and honeſt; and what is held by the ſtoicks, 'That nature herſelf proceeds contrary to juſ-'tice in moſt of her works;' and what is received by the Cyrenaics *, 'That there is nothing juſt in itſelf, 'but that cuſtoms and laws make juſtice:' And what the Theodorians hold, that maintain theft, ſacrilege, and all ſorts of uncleanneſs juſt in a wiſe man †, if he knows them to be profitable to him; there is no remedy, I am in the ſame caſe that Alcibiades was, that I will never, if I can help it, put myſelf into the hands of a man who ſhall determine of my head, where my life and honour ſhall more depend upon the care and diligence of my attorney, than upon my own innocence. I would venture myſelf with ſuch a juſtice, as would take notice of my good deeds as well as my ill, and where I had as much to hope as to fear. Indemnity is not ſufficient ſatisfaction to a man who does better than not to do amiſs; but our juſtice preſents us only one hand, and that the left hand too; let him be who he will, he ſhall be ſure to go off with loſs.

In China, of which kingdom the government and arts, without correſpondence with, or knowledge of ours, ſurpaſs our beſt examples in ſeveral parts of excellence; and of which the hiſtory gives me to underſtand how much greater and more various the world is, than either the antients or we can penetrate, the officers deputed by the prince to viſit the ſtate of his provinces, as they puniſh thoſe who behave themſelves ill in their places, ſo do they liberally reward thoſe who have carried themſelves above the common ſort, and beyond the neceſſity of their duty; they there preſent themſelves, not only to be protected, but to get; nor ſimply to be paid, but to be rewarded.

No judge, thanks be to God, has ever yet ſpoke to me, in the quality of a judge, upon any cauſe whatever,

* Diog. Laert. in the life of Ariſtippus, lib. ii. § 92.
† Ibid. § 99.

ever, whether my own, or that of another, whether criminal or civil; nor was I ever within the walls of a priſon. Imagination renders the very outſide of a jail my averſion: I am ſo fond of liberty, that ſhould I be debarred acceſs to any corner of the Indies, I ſhould be ſomewhat uneaſy. And whilſt I can find either earth or air elſewhere, I ſhall never lurk, where I muſt hide myſelf. Good God! how ill ſhould I bear to be confined, as many people are, to a corner of the kingdom, deprived of the privilege of entering into the principal cities and courts, and the liberty of the public roads, for having quarrelled with our laws. If thoſe under which I live, ſhould but wag a finger at me, by way of menace, I would immediately go ſeek out others, let them be where they would; all my little prudence in the civil war wherein we are now engaged, is employed, that they may not hinder my egreſs and regreſs.

Now the laws keep up their credit, not for being juſt, but becauſe they are laws: it is the myſtical and the ſole foundation of their authority; and it is well it is ſo; they being often made by fools; for the moſt part by men that out of hatred to equality, fail in equity; but always by men who are vain and fickle authors. There is nothing ſo groſly, nor ſo commonly faulty as the laws. Whoever obeys them becauſe they are juſt, does not juſtly obey them as he ought. Our French laws, by their irregularity and deformity, do in ſome ſort lend a helping hand to diſorder and corruption, as is manifeſt in their diſpenſation and execution. The command is ſo perplexed and inconſtant, that it in ſome ſort excuſes both diſobedience, and the vice of the interpretation, the adminiſtration and the obſervation of it. What fruit then ſoever we may reap from experience, will be of little ſervice to our inſtruction, which we draw from foreign examples; if we make ſo little profit of that we have of our own, which is more familiar to us, and doubtleſs ſufficient to inſtruct us in that whereof we have abſolute need. I ſtudy myſelf more than any other ſubject; this is my metaphyſic, this my natural philoſophy.

Quis

Quis Deus hanc mundi temperet arte domum,
Qua venit exoriens, qua deficit, unde coactis *
Cornibus in plenum menſtrua luna redit:
Unde ſalo ſuperant venti, quid flamine captet
Eurus, et in nubes unde perennis aqua.
Sit ventura dies mundi quæ ſubruat arces:
Quærite, quos agitat mundi labor †.

By what means God the univerſe does ſway,
Or how the pale-fac'd ſiſter of the day,
When, in encreaſing, can her horns unite,
Till they contract into a full orb'd light.
Why winds do of the ſea the better get,
Why Eurus blows, and clouds are always wet,
What day the world's great fabrick muſt o'erthrow,
Let them inquire, who would its ſecrets know.

In this univerſality, I ſuffer myſelf to be ignorantly and negligently led by the general law of the world. I ſhall know it well enough when I feel it; my learning cannot make it alter its courſe; it will not change itſelf for me, it is folly to hope it, and a greater folly to concern a man's ſelf about it, ſeeing it is neceſſary alike, public and common. The bounty and capacity of the governor muſt abſolutely diſcharge us of all care of the government. Philoſophical inquiſitions and contemplations ſerve for no other uſe but to feed our curioſity. Philoſophers, with great reaſon, refer us to the rules of nature; but they have no need of ſo ſublime a knowledge: they falſify them, and preſent us with nature's face painted with too high coloured and too adulterate a complexion, from whence ſpring ſo many different pictures of ſo uniform a ſubject. As ſhe has given us feet to walk with, ſo has ſhe given us prudence to guide us in life; not ſuch an ingenious, robuſt and majeſtic prudence as that of their invention, but yet one that is eaſy, quiet and ſalutiferous; and ſuch very well performs what the other promiſes, in him who has the good luck to know how to employ it ſincerely and regularly, that is to ſay, according to nature.

* Prop. lib. iii. Eleg. 5. 26, &c.
† Lucan. lib. i. v. 417.

ture. The moſt ſimply to commit a man's ſelf to nature, is to do it the moſt wiſely. Oh what a ſoft, eaſy and wholſome pillow is ignorance and incurioſity, whereon to repoſe a well turned head! I had rather underſtand myſelf well in myſelf, than in Cicero. Of the experience I have of myſelf, I find enough to make me wiſe, if I were but a good ſcholar. Whoever calls to mind the exceſs of his paſt anger, and to what a degree that fever tranſports him, ſees the deformity of his paſſion better than in Ariſtotle, and conceives a more juſt hatred againſt it. Whoever remembers the hazards he has run, thoſe that threatened him, and the ſlight occaſions that have removed him from one ſtate to another, does by that prepare himſelf for future changes, and the acknowledgment of his condition. The life of Cæſar himſelf is no more exemplary for us than our own, and though it was popular and commanding, it was ſtill a life contingent to all human accidents. Let us but liſten to it, and we apply to ourſelves all whereof we have principal need. Whoever calls to memory, how many times he has been miſtaken in his own judgment, is he not a great fool if he does not ever after ſuſpect it? When I find myſelf convinced, by another's reaſon, of a falſe opinion, I do not ſo much learn what he has ſaid to me that is new, which particular ignorance would be no great purchaſe, as I do in general my own weakneſs, and the treachery of my underſtanding, from whence I extract the reformation of the whole maſs. In all my other errors I do the ſame, and find this rule greatly beneficial to life. I regard not the ſpecies and individual, as a ſtone that I have ſtumbled at; I learn to ſuſpect my ſteps every-where, and am careful to place them right. To learn that a man has ſaid or done a fooliſh thing, is a thing of no moment. A man muſt learn that he is nothing but a fool, a much more ample and important inſtruction. The falſe ſteps that my memory has ſo often betrayed me into, even when it was moſt ſecure of itſelf, are not idly thrown away; it may now ſwear to me, and aſſure me as much as it will, I ſhake my head, and dare not truſt it; the firſt oppoſition that is made to my teſtimony, puts me in ſuſpence;

ſuſpence; and I durſt not rely upon it in any thing of moment, nor warrant it in another body's concerns: And were it not that what I do for want of memory, others do more often for want of ſincerity, I ſhould always in matter of fact, rather chooſe to take truth from another's mouth than my own. If every one did but watch the effects and circumſtances of the paſſions that ſway him, as I have done that which I am moſt ſubject to, he would ſee them coming, and would a little break their impetuoſity and career; they do not always ſeize us on a ſudden, there are threatnings, and degrees.

Fluctus uti primo cœpit cum albeſcere vento,
Paulatim ſeſe tollit mare, et altiùs undas
Erigit, inde imo conſurgit ad æthera fundo *.

As the ſea firſt begins to foam and fret,
Thence higher ſwells, higher, and higher yet,
Till at the laſt the waves ſo high do riſe,
They ſeem to bid defiance to the ſkies.

Judgment holds in me a magiſterial ſeat; at leaſt, it carefully endeavours to make it ſo: It lets my appetites take their own courſe; as hatred and friendſhip; nay, even that which I bear to myſelf, without ſuffering alteration and corruption. If it cannot reform the other parts according to its own model, at leaſt it ſuffers not itſelf to be corrupted by them, but plays its game apart. That admonition to every one to know themſelves, ought to be of important effect, ſince the God of wiſdom and light cauſed it to be writ on the front of his temple, as comprehending all he had to adviſe us. Plato ſays alſo, that prudence is nothing but the execution of this ordinance; and Socrates verifies it by piece-meal in Xenophon. The difficulties and obſcurity are not diſcerned in any ſcience, but by thoſe that are got into it; for a certain degree of underſtanding is requiſite to be able to know that a man is ignorant: and we muſt puſh at a door to know whether it be bolted againſt us. From hence this Platonick ſubtilty ſprings, that neither they who know are to enquire, foraſmuch as they know; nor they who do not know, for-

* Virgil. Æneid. lib. vii. ver. 528, &c.

foraſmuch as to enquire, they muſt know what they enquire of. So in this of knowing a man's ſelf, that which every man is ſeen ſo reſolved and ſatisfied in with himſelf, and that which every man thinks he ſufficiently underſtands, ſignifies, that every one underſtands nothing at all of the matter: as Socrates tells Euthydemus. I who profeſs nothing elſe, do therein find ſo infinite a depth and variety, that all the fruit I have reaped from my learning, ſerves only to make me ſenſible how much I have to learn. To my weakneſs, ſo often confeſſed, I owe the propenſion I have to modeſty, my aſſent to the articles of belief impoſed upon me, a conſtant faintneſs and moderation in my opinions, and a hatred of that troubleſome and wrangling arrogancy, wholly believing and truſting in itſelf, the capital enemy of diſcipline and truth. Do but hear how they advance and domineer; the firſt fooleries they utter, are in the ſtyle wherewith men eſtabliſh religion and laws. "Nihil eſt turpius quam cognitioni et percep-" tioni aſſertionem, approbationemque præcurrere *." *i. e.* 'Nothing is more abſurd than that aſſertion and 'approbation ſhould precede knowledge and perception.' Ariſtarchus ſaid, that antiently there were ſcarce ſeven wiſe men to be found in the world, and in his time ſcarce ſo many fools. Have not we more reaſon than he to ſay ſo in this age of ours? Affirmation, and obſtinacy, are expreſs ſigns of ſtupidity. If a fellow has ſtumbled and had a hundred falls in a day, yet he will be at his ergo's as reſolute and ſturdy, as before; ſo that one would conclude he had had ſome new ſoul and vigour of underſtanding infuſed into him: and that it happened to him as it did to that antient ſon of Tellus, who took freſh courage, and was made ſtronger by his fall.

——*cui cum tetigere parentem,*
Jam defecta vigent renovato robore membra †.

Whoſe broken limbs upon his mother laid,
Immediately new force and vigour had.

Does not this incorrigible coxcomb think that he aſſumes a new underſtanding, by undertaking a new diſpute? I

 accuſe

* Cicero acad. lib. i. c. 12. † Lucan lib. iv. v. 599.

accuſe human ignorance by my own experience, which is in my opinion the world's beſt ſchool-maſter. Such as will not conclude it ſo in themſelves, by ſo vain an example as mine, or their own, let them believe it from Socrates, the maſter of the maſters. For the philoſopher Antiſthenes ſaid to his diſciples: 'Let us go, and 'hear Socrates, I will be a pupil with you *.' And maintaining this doctrine of his ſtoical ſect, That virtue was ſufficient to make a life compleatly happy, he added, it had no need of any other thing whatever, except the vigour of Socrates. The long attention that I employ in conſidering myſelf, does alſo fit me to judge tolerably of others, and there are few things whereof I ſpeak better, and more excuſably. I happen very oft to ſee and diſtinguiſh the qualities of my friends more nicely than they do themſelves. I have aſtoniſhed ſome with the pertinence of my deſcription, and have given them warning of themſelves. By having from my infancy been accuſtomed to contemplate my own life in thoſe of others, I have acquired a complexion ſtudious in that particular. And when I am once intent upon it, I let few things about me, whether countenances, humours, or diſcourſes which ſerve to that purpoſe, eſcape me. I ſtudy all, both what I am to avoid, and what I am to follow. Alſo in my friends, I diſcover their inward inclinations by their productions; not by ranging this infinite variety of ſo different and detached actions into certain ſpecies and chapters, nor diſtinctly diſtributing my parcels and diviſions under known heads and claſſes.

Sed neque quam multæ ſpecies, et nomina quæ ſint,
Et numerus †.
But not the number of their kind and names,
They are too many.

The learned ſpeak and deliver their fancies more ſpecifically, and by piece-meal. I, who ſee no further into things than as cuſtom informs me, generally give mine by way of experiment, without form and method. As in this, I pronounce my opinion by looſe and disjointed articles;

* Dieg. Laert. in the life of Antiſthenes, lib. vi. § 2.
† Virg. Geor. lib. ii. v. 103. where he is ſpeaking of the innumerable kinds of Grapes.

articles; it is a thing that cannot be ſpoke at once, and in groſs. Relation and conformity are not to be found in ſuch low and common ſouls as ours. Wiſdom is a ſolid and entire building, of which every piece keeps its place, and carries its mark. "Sola ſapientia in ſe "tota converſa eſt *." 'Wiſdom only is wholly turned 'into itſelf.' I leave it to artiſts, (and I know not whether or no they will be able to bring it about in a thing ſo perplexed, ſmall and caſual) to marſhal into diſtinct bodies, this infinite diverſity of faces, and to ſettle and regulate our inconſtancy. I do not only find it hard to piece our actions to one another, but I moreover find it very hard properly to deſign them every one by themſelves by any principal quality, ſo ambiguous and capricious they are by the ſeveral lights. That, which is remarked for rare in Perſeus king of Macedon, that his mind fixing itſelf to no one condition, wandered through all ſorts of life, and behaved in a manner ſo wild and uncouth, that it was neither known by himſelf, or any other, what kind of man he was †, ſeems almoſt to ſuit all mankind. And moreover, I have ſeen another of his cut, to whom I think this concluſion might more properly be applied: he kept no medium, but was ſtill running headlong from one extreme to another, upon occaſions not to be gueſſed at; he ſteered no manner of courſe without traverſe and wonderful contrariety; and had no one quality uncompounded: So that the beſt gueſs that man can one day make, will be, that he affected and ſtudied to make himſelf known, by being not to be known. A man had need have good ears to hear himſelf frankly cenſured. And as there are few that can bear this without being nettled, thoſe who hazard the undertaking it to us, manifeſt a ſingular effect of friendſhip; for it is ſincere love indeed, to attempt to hurt and offend us for our own good. I think it rude to cenſure a man whoſe ill qualities are more than his good ones. Plato requires three things in him that will examine the ſoul of another, to wit ‖, knowledge, good will, and boldneſs.

* Cicero de fin. lib. iii. c. 7. † Tit. Liv. lib. xii. c. 20.
‖ Socrates in Plato's dialogue, intitled Gorgias.

I was once aſked what I ſhould have thought myſelf fit for, had any one deſigned to make uſe of me in my younger years.

Dum melior vires ſanguis dabat, æmula nedum
Temporibus geminis canebat ſparſa ſenectus *.

Whilſt better blood my limbs with vigour fed,
And ere old age had ſnow'd upon my head.

For nothing, ſaid I. And I am willing enough to excuſe my inability to do any thing, that may enſlave myſelf to another. But I ſhould have told theſe truths to my ſovereign, and have controuled his manners, if he had ſo pleaſed; not in groſs by ſcholaſtic leſſons, which I underſtand not, and from which indeed I ſee no true reformation ſpring in thoſe that do; but by obſerving them gradually, at all opportunities, and ſimply and naturally judging them by the eye, and diſtinctly one by one, giving him to underſtand upon what terms he was in the common opinion, in oppoſition to his flatterers. There is none of us that would not be worſe than kings, if ſo continually corrupted as they are with that ſort of vermin. Could even Alexander, that great king and philoſopher, defend himſelf from them? I ſhould have fidelity, judgment, and freedom enough for that purpoſe. This would be a nameleſs office; otherwiſe it would loſe both its grace and effect; and it is a part that is not indifferently fit for all men. For truth itſelf has not the privilege to be ſpoke at all times, and in all events; the uſe of it, noble as it is, has its circumſcriptions and limits. It oft falls out, as the world now goes, that a man lets it ſlip into the ear of a prince, not only to no purpoſe, but moreover injuriouſly and unjuſtly. And no man ſhall make me believe, that a virtuous remonſtrance may not be viciouſly applied, and that the intereſt of the ſubſtance is not oft to give place to that of the form.

For ſuch a purpoſe, I would have a man that is content with his own fortune;

Quod

* Æneid. lib. v. ver. 415.

Quod ſit, eſſe velit, nihilque malit *.

Who likes that preſent ſtate of his,
And would not be but what he is.

and born to a moderate fortune; foraſmuch as on the one hand he would not ſcruple to touch his ſovereign's heart to the quick, for fear of loſing his preferment: and on the other hand, by being of a middling quality, he would have more eaſy communication with all ſorts of people: and I would have this office limited to only one man, becauſe to diffuſe the privilege of this liberty and privacy to many, would beget an inconvenient irreverence; and even of that one too, I would above all things require the fidelity of ſilence.

A king is not to be believed when he boaſts of his conſtancy in ſtanding the ſhock of the enemy for his glory, if for his profit and amendment, he cannot bear the freedom of a friend's advice, which can do no more than ſting his ear, the remainder of its effect being ſtill in his own power. Now, there is no rank of men whatever who ſtand in ſo great need of true and free admonition as they do. They act in a public ſphere, and have ſo many ſpectators to pleaſe, that when men have uſed to conceal from them whatever ſhould divert them from their own courſe, they inſenſibly have found themſelves involved in the hatred and deteſtation of their people, ſometimes upon ſuch ſlight occaſions as they might have avoided without any prejudice even to their pleaſures themſelves, had they been adviſed and ſet right in time. Their favourites commonly have more regard to themſelves, than they have to their ſovereigns; and indeed it ſtands them upon, foraſmuch as in truth moſt offices of true friendſhip when applied to the ſovereign, are diſagreeable and dangerous in the eſſay; ſo that therein there is need, not only of very great affection and freedom, but of courage too.

To conclude, all this medley of things here compiled, is nothing but a regiſter of my own experiments in life, which for its internal ſoundneſs is exemplary

* Mart. Ep. lib. x. epig. 47. v. 12.

enough to take inſtruction againſt the grain; but as to bodily health, no man can furniſh out more profitable experience than I, who preſent it pure, and no way corrupted and changed by art and opinion. Experience is properly upon its own dung-hill in the ſubject of phyſic, where reaſon wholly gives it place. Tiberius * ſaid, that whoever had lived twenty years, ought to be reſponſible to himſelf for all things that were hurtful or wholſome to him, and to know how to order himſelf without phyſic. And he might have learnt it of Socrates, who adviſing his diſciples to be ſollicitous of their health, and to make it their chief ſtudy, added, that it was hard if a man of ſenſe, that took care of his exerciſes and diet, did not better know than any phyſician, what was good or bad for him. And indeed phyſic does profeſs always to have experience for the touch-ſtone of its operations. And Plato was right when he ſaid, that to be a true phyſician, he who profeſſed that ſcience ſhould firſt himſelf have paſſed through all the diſeaſes he pretends to cure, and through all the accidents and circumſtances whereof he is to judge. 'Tis but reaſon they ſhould get the pox, if they will know how to cure it; for my part, I ſhould chuſe to put myſelf into ſuch hands: for the others only guide us, like him who paints the ſea, rocks, and ports, and draws the model of a ſhip as he ſits ſafe at his table; but ſend him to ſea, he knows not what courſe to ſteer. They make ſuch a deſcription of our maladies, as a town-crier does of a loſt horſe, or dog, of ſuch a colour, ſuch heighth, ſuch an ear; but bring the animal

* I cannot imagine where Montaigne met with that ſaying of Tiberius, that after the age of twenty years, a man ought to have nothing to do with phyſical remedies. Suetonius only ſays, that Tiberius, after he was 30 years of age, governed his health after his own fancy, and without the help and advice of phyſicians. Sueton. in the life of Tiberius, § 68. And Plutarch tells us in his excellent treatiſe of the 'Rules and precepts for health,' that he remembered to have heard, that Tiberius uſed to ſay, that the man who after threeſcore years of age held his hand out to a phyſician to feel his pulſe, deſerved to be laughed at for a fool. Ch. 23. of Amyot's tranſlation.

mal to him, and he knows him not for all that. God grant that phyſic may one day give me ſome good and viſible relief, namely, when I ſhall cry out in good earneſt,

Tandem efficaci do manus Scientiæ *.

At length I own the power of thy pill,
And let its operation cure or kill.

The arts that promiſe to keep our bodies and ſouls in health, promiſe a great deal, but withal, there is none that leſs keep their promiſe. And in our times, thoſe that make profeſſion of theſe arts amongſt us, leſs manifeſt the effects of them than all other men. One may ſay of them at the moſt, that they ſell medicinal drugs, but that they are phyſicians a man cannot ſay. I have lived ſo long as to be able to give an account of my practice hitherto. And, whoever has a mind to read it, as his taſter, I give him this eſſay, of which theſe are ſome articles, as they occur to my memory. I have no cuſtom that has not varied according to accidents; but I record thoſe I have been moſt uſed to, and that hitherto have had the greateſt poſſeſſion of me.

My form of life is the ſame in ſickneſs that it is in health, the ſame bed, the ſame hours, the ſame meats and the ſame liquors ſerve me; I add nothing to them but the moderation of more or leſs, according to my ſtrength and appetite. My health conſiſts in maintaining my wounded ſtate without diſturbance. I ſee that ſickneſs deprives me of it on one hand, and if I will be ruled by the phyſicians, they will rob me of it on the other hand; ſo that both by fortune and by art I am put out of my road. I believe nothing more certainly than this, that I cannot be hurt by the uſe of things to which I have been ſo long accuſtomed. 'Tis cuſtom that gives the form to a man's life, as it beſt pleaſes her, who in that is all and all: 'tis the beverage of Circe that varies our nature how it pleaſes. How many nations, and but little way from us, think our fear of the ſun's exhalations in a very clear day, that ſo manifeſtly hurt us, ridiculous, and our very watermen and peaſants laugh at it. You make a German ſick if you lay him

* Hor. Epode 17. v. 1.

him on a mattraſs, as you do an Italian if you put him on a feather bed; and a Frenchman without curtains and a fire. A Spaniſh ſtomach cannot hold out to eat as we can, nor ours to drink like the Swiſs. A German made me very merry at Augſbourg in finding fault with our hearths, by the ſame arguments which we commonly make uſe of in decrying their ſtoves: for, to ſay the truth, that ſmothered heat, and the ſcent too of that matter with which they are heated again and again, offend moſt people who are not uſed to them, but not me; yet as to the reſt, this heat being equal, conſtant and univerſal, without flame, without ſmoke, and without the wind that comes down our chimnies, they may in other reſpects endure compariſon with ours. Why do we not imitate the Roman architecture? For, they ſay, that antiently fires were not made in their houſes, but on the out-ſide, and at the foot of them, from whence the heat was conveyed to the whole fabric by pipes contrived in the wall, which were drawn twining about the rooms which were to be warmed: which I have ſeen plainly deſcribed ſomewhere in Seneca. This German gentleman hearing me commend the conveniencies and beauties of his city, which truly deſerves it, began to pity me that I was to go away. And the firſt inconvenience he alledged to me was, the dizzineſs which the chimneys elſewhere brought upon me. He had heard ſome one make this complaint, and fixed it upon us, he being by cuſtom deprived of the means of perceiving it in his houſe. All heat that comes from fire makes me weak and dull, and yet Evenus ſaid, that fire was the beſt ſeaſoning * of life. I rather chuſe ony other way of making myſelf warm.

We are afraid to drink our wines when towards the lees; whereas in Portugal their heady fumes are reputed delicious, and 'tis the beverage of princes. In fine, every nation has ſeveral cuſtoms and uſages, that are not only unknown, but ſavage and miraculous to ſome others. What ſhould we do with thoſe people who admit of no teſtimonies, if not printed, who believe no men if they are not in a book, nor any truth, if not of a competent age? We give our follies a ſanction when we

* Plutarch in his Platonic queſtions, c. 3.

we commit them to the preſs. 'Tis of a great deal more weight to him you addreſs, to ſay, 'I have read 'ſuch a thing,' than if you only ſay, 'I have heard 'ſuch a thing ſaid.' But I, who no more diſbelieve a man's mouth than his pen, and who know that men write as indiſcreetly as they ſpeak, and who eſteem this age as much as one that's paſt, do as ſoon quote a friend of my acquaintance as Aulus Gellius, or Macrobius, and what I have ſeen, as what they have writ. And, as 'tis held of virtue, that it is not greater for having continued longer, ſo do I hold of truth, that for being older it is not wiſer. I often ſay, that it is mere folly which makes us run after ſtrange and ſcholaſtic examples. Their fertility is the ſame now that it was in the time of Homer and Plato. But is it not that we aim at more honour from the quotation than from the truth of the diſcourſe? As if it were more to the purpoſe to borrow our proofs from the ſhops of Valcoſan or of Plantin, than from what is to be ſeen in our own village: or elſe indeed, that we have not the wit to cull out and improve what we ſee before us, and to judge of it lively enough to draw it into example. For if we ſay that we want authority to procure faith to our teſtimony, we ſpeak improperly, foraſmuch as, in my opinion, of the moſt ordinary, common, and known things, could we but penetrate them, the greateſt miracles of nature might be formed, and the moſt wonderful examples, eſpecially upon the ſubjects of human actions.

Now as to the point I am ſpeaking of, ſetting aſide the proofs I have gathered from books, and what Ariſtotle ſays of Andron the Argian, that he travelled over the burning hot ſands of Libya without drinking *; a gentleman who has behaved very well in ſeveral employments, ſaid in a place where I was, that he had travelled from Madrid to Liſbon in the heat of ſummer, without any drink at all; he is very ſtout for his age, and hath nothing extraordinary in his way of life, but this, that ſometimes he paſſes two or three months, nay, a whole year, as he told me, without drinking. He

* Diogenes Laert. in the life of Pyrrho, lib. ix. § 81. and Menager's remarks on it, p. 434.

He has ſometimes a thirſt, but he lets it paſs over; he ſays it is an appetite which eaſily goes off of itſelf, and drinks more out of humour, than either for need or pleaſure.

Here is another example: 'Tis not long ago that I found one of the learnedeſt men in France, and one of no mean fortune, ſtudying in a corner of a hall, where he was only ſeparated by tapeſtry, from a rabble of his ſervants, who you may be ſure were rude and loud enough. He told me, and Seneca almoſt ſays the ſame of himſelf, that he made an advantage of this noiſe; as if by being dinned with this rattle, he the better recollected and retired himſelf into himſelf for contemplation, and as if this tempeſt of voices repercuſſed his thoughts inwards. Being at Padua, he had his ſtudy ſo long ſituated in the rattle of coaches, and the tumult of the ſquare, that he not only formed himſelf to the contempt, but even to the uſe of noiſe, for the ſervice of his ſtudies. Socrates anſwered Alcibiades, who being aſtoniſhed at his patience, aſked him how he could endure the perpetual clack of his ſcolding wife, 'Why,' ſaid he, 'as thoſe do who are accuſtomed to 'the ordinary noiſe of wheels for drawing water.' I am quite otherwiſe; I have a tender head, brain very volatile; and when 'tis bent upon any one thing, the leaſt buzzing of a fly tears it into pieces. Seneca *, in his youth, having, by the example of Sextius, formed a poſitive reſolution of eating nothing that had life, paſſed over a whole year without it, as he ſaid, with pleaſure, and only returned to animal food, that he might not be ſuſpected of taking up this rule from ſome new religions by which it was preſcribed. But he took up withal, from the precepts of Attalus, a cuſtom, not to lie any more upon ſoft bedding, but even to his old age made uſe of ſuch as would not yield to any preſſure. What the cuſtom of his time denominated roughneſs, ours treats as effeminacy. Do but obſerve the difference betwixt the way of living of my labourers, and that of mine; the Scythians and the Indians have nothing more remote both from my force and method. I know very well, that I have picked up beggar boys to ſerve

* Seneca, Epiſt. 108.

ſerve me, who ſoon after have quitted both my kitchen and livery, only that they might return to their former courſe of life: and I found one afterwards gathering muſcles out of the ſink for his dinner, whom I could neither by intreaties nor threats, reclaim from the ſweetneſs and reliſh he found in indigence. Beggars have their grandeur and delights, as well as the rich; and 'tis ſaid, their particular dignities and politics. Theſe are the effects of cuſtom, which can mould us not only into what form ſhe pleaſes, (and yet the ſages ſay, we ought to apply ourſelves to the beſt, which ſhe would ſoon make eaſy to us) but alſo to change and variation, which is the moſt noble and moſt uſeful of her documents. The beſt of my bodily perfections is, that I am flexible, and not very obſtinate. I have ſome inclinations more proper and ordinary, and more agreeable than others; but I deviate from them with very little trouble, and eaſily ſlip into a contrary courſe. A young man ought to croſs his own rules to awake his vigour, and to keep it from growing mouldy and ruſty. And there is no courſe of life ſo weak and ſottiſh, as that which is carried on by rule and diſcipline.

Ad primum lapidem vectari cum placet, hora
Sumitur ex libro; ſi prurit frictus ocelli
Angulus, inſpecta geneſi collyria quærit *.

If but a mile he travel out of town
The planetary hour muſt firſt be known;
If he but rub the corner of his eye,
He chuſes ſalve by his nativity.

He will often relapſe into exceſſes, if he will take my word for it; otherwiſe the leaſt debauch ruins him. He renders himſelf uneaſy, and diſagreeable in converſation. The worſt quality in a well-bred man is delicacy, and being attached to a certain particular form; and it is particular, if not pliable and ſupple. It is a kind of reproach, not to be able, or not to dare to do what he ſees others do. Let ſuch as thoſe ſit at home. It is in every man indecent, but in a ſoldier vicious and intolerable; who, as Philopœmen ſaid, ought

* Juven. Sat. 6. v. 576.

ought to accuſtom himſelf to all variety, and inequality of life.

Though I have been brought up, as much as it was poſſible to liberty and indifference, yet ſo it is that through this indifference, by growing old, and having more ſettled upon certain forms (my age is now paſt inſtruction, and I have henceforward nothing to do but to take care of it as well as I can) cuſtom has already, ere I was aware, ſo imprinted its character in me, in certain things, that I look upon it as a kind of exceſs to depart from them. And, without a force upon myſelf, I cannot ſleep in the day-time, nor eat between meals, nor breakfaſt, nor go to bed, without a great interval, as of three hours after ſupper; nor get children till I have ſlept, and never ſtanding upon my feet, nor endure to put myſelf in a ſweat, nor quench my thirſt either with pure water or wine, nor keep my head long bare, nor have it ſhaved after dinner; and I ſhould be as uneaſy without my gloves, as without my ſhirt, or without waſhing when I riſe from table, or out of my bed; and could not lye without a canopy and curtains, as neceſſary things: I could dine without a table cloth, but not without a clean napkin, after the German faſhion. I foul them more than they, or the Italians do, and make but little uſe of either ſpoon or fork. I am ſorry that the ſame is not in uſe amongſt us, that I ſee at the tables of kings; which is, to change our napkins at every ſervice, as they do our plates. We are told of that laborious ſoldier Marius, that growing old, he became nice in his drinking, and never drank but out of a particular cup of his own. I, in like manner, fancy glaſſes of a certain form, and do not willingly drink in a common glaſs with others: all metal offends me compared with matter clear and tranſparent: let my eyes taſte too, as far as they can. I owe ſeveral ſuch delicacies to cuſtom. Nature has alſo on the other hand, helped me to ſome of hers, as no longer to be able to endure two full meals in one day, without overcharging my ſtomach, nor a total abſtinence from one of thoſe meals, without filling myſelf with wind, furring my mouth, and blunting my appetite. I alſo diſlike the evening air. For of late years, in marſhes, which

which often happen to be all night long, after five or ſix hours, my ſtomach begins to be queaſy, with a violent pain in my head, ſo that I always vomit before the day break. When others go to breakfaſt I go to ſleep, and when I riſe am as briſk as before. I had always been told, that the dews never fell but in the beginning of the night; but for certain years paſt, after long and familiar acquaintance with a lord poſſeſſed with the opinion, that the ſerene is more ſharp and dangerous about the declining of the ſun, an hour or two before it ſets, which he carefully avoids, and deſpiſes that of the night; he had almoſt brought me into his opinion. What, ſhall the very doubt and enquiry ſtrike our imagination ſo as to alter us? Such as on a ſudden give way to their propenſions, bring entire ruin upon themſelves. And I am ſorry for ſeveral gentlemen, who, through the folly of their phyſicians, have in their youth and ſtrength brought themſelves into conſumptions. It were even yet better to endure a cough, than by diſuſance for ever to loſe the commerce of the common life in an action of ſo great uſe. Ill-natured ſcience, to put us out of conceit with the moſt pleaſant hours of the day: let us keep poſſeſſion of it to the laſt. For the moſt part a man hardens himſelf by being obſtinate, and corrects his conſtitution, as Cæſar did the falling-ſickneſs, by dint of contempt. A man ſhould addict himſelf to the beſt rules, but not inſlave himſelf to them; yet there is one to which a ſlaviſh attachment is uſeful.

Both kings and philoſophers go to ſtool, and ladies too; public lives are bound to ceremony; mine that is obſcure and private, enjoys all natural diſpenſation. Soldier and Gaſcon are alſo characters a little ſubject to indiſcretion in this point; wherefore I ſhall ſay of this action, that it is neceſſary to refer it to certain preſcribed and nocturnal hours, and to force a man's ſelf to it by cuſtom, as I have done; but not to ſubject himſelf, as I have done in my declining years, to look out for a particular convenience of place and ſeat for that purpoſe, and making it troubleſome by long ſitting: and yet in the fouleſt offices, is it not in ſome meaſure excuſable to require more care and cleanlineſs? "Natura

" homo mundum, et elegans animal eſt." *i. e.* ' Man ' is by nature a clean and elegant creature *.' Of all the actions of nature, I hate moſt the being interrupted in that. I have ſeen many ſoldiers troubled with an irregular call, whilſt I and my belly never fail of our punctual aſſignation, which is at leaping out of bed, if ſome violent buſineſs, or ſickneſs do not moleſt us.

I do not think therefore, as I ſaid before, that valetudinarians can be ſafer than by keeping cloſe to that courſe of life wherein they have been bred and trained up. Alteration, be it what it will, aſtoniſhes and hurts. Can you believe that cheſnuts can hurt a Perigourdin, or one of Lucca; or milk and cheeſe the mountaineers? Men enjoin them not only a new, but a contrary method of life, a change which a man in health could not endure. To preſcribe water to a native of Bretagne of threeſcore and ten; to ſhut a ſeaman up in a ſtove, and to forbid a footman to walk, is to deprive them of motion, and at laſt of air and light.

——— *an vivere tanti eſt?*
Cogimur a ſuetis animum ſuſpendere rebus,
Atque ut vivamus vivere deſinimus.
Hoc ſupereſſe reor quibus et ſpirabilis aer
Et lux qua regimur, redditur ipſa gravis †.

To human life a gift of ſo much price
When our old habits we muſt ſacrifice,
And live no longer, — to live otherwiſe?
I can't imagine that they longer live,
To whom nor light, nor air does comfort give.

If they do no other good, they do this at leaſt, that they prepare patients betimes for death, by little and little undermining and curtailing the uſage of life.

Both well and ſick, I have ever willingly gratified the appetites that preſt upon me. I gave great authority to my propenſions and deſires. I do not love to cure one diſeaſe by another. I hate remedies that are more troubleſome than the diſeaſe. To be ſubject to the ſtone, and ſubject to abſtain from the pleaſure of eating oyſters, are two evils inſtead of one. The diſeaſe torments us on the one hand, and the preſcription on

* Seneca, Epiſt. 92. † Gallus, Eleg. 1 v. 55.--255.

on the other. Since we are ever in danger of miſtaking, let us rather run a hazard by the continuance of pleaſure. The world proceeds quite contrary, and thinks nothing profitable that is not painful; eaſe ſtands ſuſpected by it. My appetite is in ſeveral things of itſelf happily enough accommodated to the health of my ſtomach. Acrimony and quickneſs in ſauces were pleaſant to me when young, but my ſtomach diſliking them, my taſte for them incontinently went off. Wine is hurtful to ſick people; and 'tis the firſt thing that my mouth diſreliſhes when I am ſick, and with an invincible diſguſt. Whatever I take againſt my liking does me harm; but nothing hurts me that I eat with appetite and delight; I never received harm by any action that was pleaſant to me; and accordingly have made all medicinal concluſions give intire precedency to my pleaſure. And, when I was young,

Quem circumcurſans huc, atque huc ſæpe cupido
Fulgebat crocina ſplendidus in tunica *.

Whilſt Cupid round me fluttering did fly,
In his gay mantle of the Tyrian dye.

I gave myſelf the reins as licentiouſly and raſhly as any body elſe to my then governing paſſion.

Et militavi non ſine gloria †.

And gallantly fought in the ſervice of beauty.

yet more in continuation and holding out, than in a ſally.

Sex me vix memini ſuſtinuiſſe vices §.

'Tis certainly a misfortune, and a miracle at once, to confeſs at what a tender age I was firſt ſubjected to love: it was indeed by chance; for it was long before the years of choice or diſcretion: I do not remember myſelf ſo long ago. And my fortune may very well be

* Catullus Carm. 56. v. 133. † Hor. lib. iii. ode 26. ver. 2.
§ Ovid. Amor. lib. iii. Eleg. 7. v. 26. Some very curious enquirers will blame me for not having explained this little verſe; and there are others whom I rather choſe to keep fair with, would give me a rap on the knuckles if I had. All I can do to oblige the firſt, is to refer them to Fontain's tale de Berceau, v. 246.

compared to that of Quartilla *, who could not remember when ſhe loſt her virginity.

Inde tragus celereſque pili, mirandaque matri
Barba mea †.

Therefore my beard budded early, to my mother's admiration.

Phyſicians commonly ſubmit their rules to the violent longings that happen to ſick perſons, with very good ſucceſs. This great deſire, as ſtrange and vicious as it is, it cannot be imagined, but that nature muſt have a hand in it. And then how eaſy a thing is it to ſatisfy the fancy? In my opinion, this part wholly carries it, at leaſt, above all the reſt. The moſt grievous and common evils are thoſe that fancy loads us with. This Spaniſh ſaying pleaſes me in ſeveral ſenſes; "Defienda "me Dios de my." *i. e.* 'God defend me from my-"ſelf.' I am ſorry when I am ſick, that I have not ſome longing that might give me the contentment of ſatisfying it; phyſick would hardly be able to divert me from it. I do the ſame when I am well. I can think of very little more than to hope or wiſh. 'Tis pity a man ſhould be ſo weak and languiſhing, as to have nothing left him but wiſhing.

The art of phyſick is not ſo ſolidly eſtabliſhed as to leave us without authority for whatever we do; according to Fernelius and Scala it changes according to the climates and moons. If your phyſician does not think it good for you to ſleep, to drink wine, or to eat ſuch and ſuch meats, never trouble yourſelf, I will find you another that ſhall not be of his opinion; the diverſity of phyſical arguments and opinions includes all ſorts of methods. I ſaw a miſerable ſick perſon panting and burning with thirſt, in order that he might be cured; who was afterwards laughed at by another phyſician, who condemned that advice as hurtful to him: did he not torment himſelf to good purpoſe? A man of that profeſſion is lately dead of the ſtone, who had made trial of extreme abſtinence to contend with his diſeaſe. His fellow phyſicians ſaid, that on the contrary, this abſtinence

* Petronius, p. 17. The Paris Edit. An. 1587. † Martial, lib. xi. Ep. 23. v. 7 and 8.

abſtinence had dryed his body up, and baked the gravel in his kidneys.

I have obſerved, that both in wounds and ſickneſſes, ſpeaking diſcompoſes and hurts me as much as any irregularity I can commit. My voice ſpends and tires me, for 'tis loud and ſtrained; ſo that when I have gone to whiſper ſome great perſons about affairs of conſequence, they have oft deſired me to moderate my voice.

This ſtory juſtifies a digreſſion here: A perſon in a certain Greek ſchool *, ſpeaking loud as I do, the maſter of the ceremonies ſent to him to ſpeak ſoftly, 'Tell him then he muſt ſend me,' replied the other, 'the tone he would have me ſpeak in.' To which the other replied, 'That he ſhould take the tone from the 'ear of him to whom he ſpake.' This was well ſaid, if he meant, 'Speak according to the affair you are 'ſpeaking about to your auditor,' for if it mean, ''tis 'ſufficient that he hears you; or govern yourſelf by 'him;' I do not think it to be reaſon. The tone and motion of the voice carries with it a great deal of the expreſſion and ſignification of my meaning, and 'tis I who am to govern it, to make myſelf underſtood. There is a voice to inſtruct, a voice to flatter, and a voice to reprehend. I will not only that my voice reach him, but peradventure that it ſtrike and pierce him. When I rattle my footman with a ſharp and bitter tone, it would be very pretty for him to ſay, 'Pray, maſter, 'ſpeak lower, I hear you very well.' "Eſt quædam "vox ad auditum accommodata, non magnitudine, ſed "proprietate." *i. e.* 'There is a certain voice accom-'modated to the hearing, not by the loudneſs, but pro-'priety †.' Speech is half his that ſpeaks, and half his that hears; the laſt of which ought to prepare himſelf to receive it, according to the bias it takes. Like tennis players, he that receives the ball, ſhifts and prepares, according as he ſees him move who ſtrikes the ball, and according to the ſtroke itſelf.

Experience has moreover taught me this, that we ruin ourſelves with impatience. Evils have their life and limits, their diſeaſes, and their recovery; the conſtitution

* This was Carneades the Academic philoſopher. See Diog. Laert. lib. iv. § 63. † Quintilian Inſtitut. Orat. lib. xi. c. 3.

ſtitution of maladies is formed by the pattern of the conſtitution of animals; they have their fortunes and days limited from their birth. Whoever attempts imperiouſly to cut them ſhort by force in the middle of their courſe, does lengthen and multiply them, and incenſes inſtead of appeaſing them. I am of Crantor's opinion, that we are neither obſtinately and wilfully to oppoſe evils, nor truckle under them for want of courage, but that we are naturally to give way to them, according to their condition and our own; we ought to let diſeaſes take their courſe: and I find they ſtay leſs with me, who let them alone. And I have loſt thoſe which are reputed the moſt tenacious and obſtinate, without any help or art, and contrary to the phyſicians rules. Let us a little permit nature to operate; ſhe better underſtands her own affairs than we. But ſuch a one died, and ſo ſhall you, if not of that diſeaſe, of another. And how many have nevertheleſs died, who have had three phyſicians to attend them? Example is a mirror, vague and univerſal, and in all ſenſes. If it be a pleaſant medicine, take it, 'tis always ſo much preſent good. I will never ſtick at the name nor the colour, if it be grateful to the palate: Pleaſure is one of the chiefeſt kinds of profit. I have ſuffered rheums, gouty defluxions, diarrheas, palpitations of the heart, megrims, and other accidents, to grow old, and die away in me, which I have been rid of when I was half fit to nouriſh them. They are ſooner wrought upon by courteſy than bravado; we muſt patiently ſuffer the laws of our condition, we are born to grow old, to grow weak, to be ſick in deſpite of all medicine. 'Tis the firſt leſſon the Mexicans teach their children; ſo ſoon as ever they come out of their mother's wombs, they thus ſalute them, 'Thou art come into the world, 'child, to endure; endure therefore, ſuffer and be 'ſilent.' 'Tis injuſtice to lament that that is fallen out to any one, which may befall every one. "Indig-"nare ſi quid in te inique, proprie conſtitutum eſt *," *i. e.* 'Then be angry when there is any thing unjuſtly 'decreed againſt thee alone.'

See

* Seneca, Epiſt. 91.

See an old man who begs of God that he will maintain his health vigorous and entire, that is to ſay, that he will reſtore him to youth:

Stulte, quid hæc fruſtra votis puerilibus optas ** ?

Thou fool, why doſt thou put up ſuch childiſh prayers, for what can ne'er be obtain'd?

Is it not folly? his condition is not capable of it. The gout, the ſtone, and indigeſtion, are ſymptoms of long years, as heat, rains and winds, are of long voyages. Plato * does not believe that Æſculapius troubled himſelf to provide by a regimen for prolonging life in a weak and waſted body, uſeleſs to his country, and to his profeſſion, and to beget healthful and robuſt children; and he does not think this ſolicitude ſuitable to the divine juſtice and prudence, which is to direct all things to utility. My good friend, your buſineſs is done, no-body can reſtore you, they can at the moſt but patch you up, and prop you a little, and prolong your miſery an hour or two.

Non ſecus inſtantem cupiens fulcire ruinam,
Diverſis contra nititur obicibus,
Donec certa dies, omni compage ſoluta,
Ipſum cum rebus ſubruat auxilium †.

Like one, who willing to defer a while
A ſudden ruin, props the tott'ring pile,
Till in ſhort ſpace the houſe, the props and all
Together with a dreadful ruin fall.

We muſt learn to ſuffer what we cannot avoid. Our life, like the harmony of the world, is compoſed of contrary things, alſo of ſeveral notes, ſweet and harſh, ſharp and flat, ſpritely and ſolemn; and the muſician who ſhould only affect one of theſe, what would he be able to ſay? He muſt know how to make uſe of them all, and to mix them; and we likewiſe the goods and evils which are conſubſtantial with our life: our being cannot ſubſiſt without this mixture, and the one tribe is no leſs neceſſary to it than the other. To attempt to

** Ovid. triſt. lib. iii. eleg. 8. v. 11.
* De republica, lib. iii. p. 623.
† Gallus, eleg. 1. v. 173, &c.

to kick againſt natural neceſſity, is to repreſent the folly of Cteſiphon, who undertook to kick with his mule.

I conſult little about the alterations I feel; for thoſe people take advantage when they have you at their mercy. They cudgel your ears with their prognoſticks; and having formerly ſurpriſed me, weakened with ſickneſs, injuriouſly handled me with their doctrines and magiſterial taunts; one while menacing me with great pains, and another with approaching death; by which threats I was indeed moved and ſhaken, but not dejected, nor juſtled from my place; and though my judgment was neither altered nor diſtracted, yet it was at leaſt embarraſſed by it. It is always agitation and ſtruggle.

Now I uſe my imagination as gently as I can, and would diſcharge it of all trouble and conteſt, if I could. A man muſt aſſiſt, flatter, and deceive it, if he can. My mind is fit for that office. It wants no appearances throughout. And could it perſuade, as it preaches, it would ſucceſsfully relieve me. Will you have an example? It tells me that it is for my good to have the ſtone: that ſtructures of my age are naturally to ſuffer ſome ruin: that it is now time they ſhould begin to disjoint, and to confeſs a decay; it is a common neceſſity, and there was no new miracle to be wrought for me: I thereby pay what is due to old age, and I cannot expect a better account of it: that ſociety ought to comfort me being fallen into the moſt common infirmity of men of my age *. I ſee every-where men tormented with the ſame diſeaſe: and am honoured by their fellowſhip, foraſmuch as men of the beſt quality are moſt frequently afflicted with it; 'tis a noble and dignified diſeaſe. That of ſuch as are afflicted with it, few have it to a leſs degree of pain, and yet they are put to the trouble of a wretched regimen, and the daily taking of nauſeous drugs; whereas I owe my better ſtate purely to my good fortune. For ſome ordinary broths of Eringo's, and Burſt-wort, that I have twice or thrice taken to oblige the ladies, who, with greater kindneſs than my pain, would needs preſent me half of

* Dulce eſt miſeris ſocios habuiſſe doloris.

of theirs, ſeemed to me equally eaſy to take, and fruitleſs in operation. They have a thouſand vows to make to Æſculapius, and as many crowns to pay to their phyſician, for the voiding gravel eaſily and plentifully, which I often do by the benefit of nature. Even the decency of my countenance is not diſturbed by it in company, and I can hold my water ten hours, and as long as any man that is in perfect health. The fear of this diſeaſe, ſays one, did formerly affright thee, when it was unknown to thee; the crying and roaring of thoſe that make it worſe by their impatience, begot a horror in thee: 'Tis an infirmity that puniſhes the members by which thou haſt moſt offended: thou art a conſcientious fellow;

Quæ venit indigne pœna, dolenda venit *.
Then puniſhments to be complain'd of are,
When laid upon a guiltleſs ſufferer.

Conſider this chaſtiſement, it is very eaſy in compariſon of that of others, and inflicted with a paternal tenderneſs: do but obſerve how late it comes; it only ſeizes on, and incommodes that ſtage of thy life, which is upon the matter ſteril, and loſt; having, as it were by compoſition, given way to the licentiouſneſs and pleaſures of thy youth. The fear and compaſſion that people have of this diſeaſe, ſerves thee for matter of pride. A quality whereof, if thou haſt thy judgment purified, and that thy reaſon be right and ſound, thy friends will yet notwithſtanding, diſcover ſome tincture in thy complexion. 'Tis pleaſure to hear it ſaid of a man's ſelf, 'here is great fortitude, here is great patience!' Thou art ſeen to ſweat with the exceſſive pain, to look pale and red, to tremble, to vomit blood, to ſuffer ſtrange contractions and convulſions, by ſtarts to let tears drop from thine eyes, to make thick, black and dreadful urine, or to have it ſuppreſt by ſome ſharp and jagged ſtone, that cruelly pricks and tears the neck of the bladder, whilſt thou entertaineſt the company with thy uſual countenance, drolling by fits with thy ſervants, making one in a continued diſcourſe, now and then excuſing thy pain, and making thy ſufferance leſs

* Ovid. epiſt. 5, v. 8.

leſs than it is. Does it put thee in mind of the men of paſt times, who ſo greedily ſought diſeaſes to keep their virtue in breath and exerciſe? Put the caſe that nature inclines and forces thee to this glorious ſchool, into which thou would'ſt never have entered, of thy own free will. If thou telleſt me, that it is a dangerous and mortal diſeaſe; what diſeaſes are not? For it is a phyſical cheat to except any, and to ſay, that they do not tend directly to death: what matter is it, if they ſteer that way by accident, and if they ſlide and wheel gently into the path that leads to it? But thou doſt not die becauſe thou art not ſick, thou dieſt becauſe thou art living. Death actually kills thee without the help of ſickneſs: and to ſome, ſickneſs has deferred death, who have lived the longer by reaſon that they thought themſelves always dying. To which may be added, that as of wounds, ſo of diſeaſes, ſome are medicinal and wholſome. The cholic is oft no leſs long-lived than you. We know men with whom it has continued from their infancy, even to their extreme old age, and if they had not parted company, it would have attended them longer ſtill; you oftener kill it than it kills you: and though it preſent you the image of approaching death, were it not a good office to a man of ſuch an age, to put him in mind of his latter end? And, which is worſe, thou haſt no longer any thing that ſhould make thee deſire to be cured. Common neceſſity will however preſently call thee away. Do but conſider how artfully and gently ſhe puts thee out of conceit with life, and weans thee from the world; not compelling thee with a tyrannical ſubjection, as by many other infirmities which you ſee old men afflicted withal, that hold them in continual torment, and keep them in perpetual and inceſſant pains and infirmities; but by warnings and inſtructions at ſeveral intervals, intermixing long pauſes of repoſe, as it were to give thee ſcope to meditate and ruminate upon thy leſſon at thy leiſure; in order to enable thee to judge aright, and to aſſume the reſolution of a man of courage, ſhe preſents to thee the entire ſtate of thy condition, both in good and evil, and with a very chearful, and an inſupportable life, alternately

alternately in one and the ſame day. If thou embraceſt not death, at leaſt thou ſhakeſt hands with it once a month; by which thou haſt more cauſe to hope that it will one day ſurpriſe thee without warning; and that being ſo oft conducted to the water-ſide, and thinking thyſelf to be ſtill upon the accuſtomed terms, thou and thy confidence will at one time or another be unexpectedly wafted over*. A man has no reaſon to complain of diſeaſes that fairly divide the time with health. I am obliged to fortune for having ſo oft aſſaulted me with the ſame ſort of weapons; ſhe forms and faſhions me by uſance, and hardens and habituates me ſo to her attacks, that I can know within a little, for how much I ſhall be quit. For want of natural memory, I make one of paper; and as any new ſymptom happens in my diſeaſe, I write it down; from whence it falls out, that being now almoſt paſt thro' all ſorts of examples, if any aſtoniſhment threaten me, tumbling over theſe little looſe notes, like the Sybils leaves, I never fail of finding matter of conſolation from ſome favourable prognoſtic in my paſt experience. Cuſtom alſo makes me hope better for the time to come. For the conduct of this evacuation having ſo long continued, it is to be believed that nature will not alter her courſe, and that no other worſe accident will happen than what I already feel. Beſides, the condition of this diſeaſe is not unſuitable to my forward and haſty complexion. When it aſſaults me gently, I am afraid, for 'tis then for a great while; but it has naturally briſk and vigorous exceſſes. It claws me to purpoſe for a day or two. My reins held out an age without alteration, and I have almoſt now lived another ſince they changed their ſtate. Evils have their periods as well as benefit, peradventure this infirmity draws towards an end. Age weakens the heat of my ſtomach, the digeſtion of which being leſs perfect, it ſends this crude matter to my reins; and why at a certain revolution may not the heat of my reins be alſo

* This ſeems to be an alluſion to what was fabled by the antient Greeks and Romans, that the dead were tranſported over the riven Styx in Charon's ferry-boat; a fancy with which we ſtill adorn our poetry, and ſometimes adopt in proſe too in our familiar converſation.

alſo abated, ſo that they can no longer petrify my phlegm, and nature pave the way for ſome other manner of purgation. Years have evidently helped me to drain certain rheums; and why not thoſe excrements which furniſh matter for gravel? but is there any thing ſweet in compariſon of this ſudden change, when from an exceſſive pain, I come, by the voiding of a ſtone, to recover, as from a flaſh of lightning, the beautiful light of health, ſo free and full as it happens in our ſudden and the ſharpeſt fits of the cholic: Is there any thing in the pain ſuffered, that can compare to the pleaſure of ſo ſudden an amendment? Oh! how much more pleaſant does health ſeem to me after ſickneſs ſo near and contiguous to each other, as that I can diſtinguiſh them in the preſence of one another in their beſt ſtate, when they vie with one another, as it were, which ſhall have the maſtery! What the Stoicks ſay, that vices are profitably introduced, to give value and ſupport to virtue; we can with better reaſon, and leſs temerity of cenſure, ſay of nature, that ſhe has given us pain for the honour and ſervice of pleaſure and indolence. When Socrates, after his fetters were knocked off, felt the pleaſure of that itching which the weight of them had cauſed in his legs, he rejoiced to conſider the ſtrict alliance betwixt pain and pleaſure, how they are linked together by a neceſſary connexion, ſo that by turns they follow and mutually beget one another; and cried out to Æſop, that he ought out of this conſideration, to have taken a ſubject proper for a fine fable.

The worſt that I ſee in other diſeaſes is, that they are not ſo grievous in their operation, as they are in their iſſue. A man is a whole year in recovering, and all the while full of weakneſs and fear. So dangerous and ſo gradual is the recovery of ſanity, that there is no end on't. Before you are allowed to throw off a handkerchief, and then a cap, before they allow you to take the air, to drink wine, lie with your wife, and eat melons, 'tis odds if you relapſe not into ſome new diſtemper. The ſtone has this privilege, that it carries itſelf clean off. Whereas others always leave behind them ſome impreſſion and alteration, which renders

ders the body ſubject to ſome new diſeaſe, and lend a hand to one another.

Thoſe are excuſable, that content themſelves with poſſeſſion of us, without extending it farther, and introducing their conſequences: but courteous and kind are thoſe whoſe departure brings us any profitable iſſue. Since I have been troubled with the ſtone, I find myſelf freed from all other accidents, much more methinks than I was before, and have never had any fever ſince. I argue, that the extreme and frequent vomitings that I am ſubject to, purge me: and on the other ſide, my loathings, and the ſtrange faſts I am forced to keep, digeſt my preſent humours; and nature in thoſe ſtones, voids whatever there is in me that is ſuperfluous and hurtful. Let it never be ſaid that this is a medicine too dear bought. For to what purpoſe are ſo many ſtinking apozems, cauſticks, inciſions, ſweats, ſeatons, diets, and ſo many other methods of cure; which oft, by reaſon we are not able to undergo their violence and importunity, bring us to our graves: ſo that when I am ſeized with the ſtone, I look upon it as phyſic; when freed from it, I think it an entire deliverance.

And here is another particular benefit of my diſeaſe; which is, that it moſt plays its game by itſelf, and lets me play mine, or elſe I only want courage to do it; for in its greateſt fury, I have endured it ten hours together on horſe-back; do but have patience, you need no other regimen, play, dine, run, do this and the other thing too if you can; your debauch will do you more good than harm. Say as much to one that has the pox, the gout, or a rupture: the other diſeaſes have more univerſal obligations, rack our actions after another kind of manner, diſturb our whole ſyſtem, and to their conſideration engage the whole ſtate of life. This only pinches the ſkin, it leaves the underſtanding and will wholly at your diſpoſal, as alſo the tongue, hands and feet. It rather awakes than ſtupifies you. The mind is ſtruck with the burning heat of a fever, overwhelmed with an epilepſy, diſtracted by a ſharp megrim, and finally aſtoniſhed by all diſeaſes that hurt the whole maſs, and the moſt noble

parts: this never attacks the ſoul. If any thing goes amiſs with her, it is her own fault, ſhe betrays, diſmounts, and abandons herſelf. There are none but fools who ſuffer themſelves to be perſuaded, that this hard and maſſy body which is baked in our kidneys, is to be diſſolved by draughts: wherefore, when it is once ſtirred, there is nothing to be done but to give it paſſage, and indeed it will take it of itſelf.

I moreover obſerve this particular convenience in it, that it is a diſeaſe wherein we have little to gueſs at. We are diſpenſed from the trouble into which other diſeaſes throw us, by the uncertainty of their cauſes, conditions, and progreſs. A trouble that is infinitely painful. We have no need of conſultation and doctoral interpretations, the ſenſes well enough inform us what it is, and where it is. By ſuch-like arguments, both weak and ſtrong, as Cicero did the diſeaſe of his old age, I try to lull, and amuſe my imagination, and to ſupple its wounds, If I find them worſe to-morrow, I will provide new ſtratagems. True it is, I am come to that paſs of late, that the leaſt motion forces pure blood out of my kidneys: and what of that? I ſtir nevertheleſs as before, and ride after my hounds with a juvenile and pert ardour, and find that I have very good ſatisfaction for an accident of that importance, when it coſts me no more but a ſtupor and alteration in that part. 'Tis ſome great ſtone that waſtes and conſumes the ſubſtance of my kidneys, and of my life, which by little and little evaporates, not without ſome natural pleaſure, as an excrement henceforward ſuperfluous and troubleſome. Now, if I feel any thing to roll, do not expect that I ſhould trouble myſelf to conſult my pulſe or my urine, thereby to put myſelf upon ſome uneaſy forethought. I ſhall ſoon enough feel the pain, without making it longer, by the diſeaſe of fear. He who fears to ſuffer, does already ſuffer what he fears. To which may be added, that the doubts and ignorance of thoſe who take upon them to explain the ſprings of nature, and her internal progreſſions, and the many falſe prognoſtics of their art, ought to give us to underſtand, that her ways are utterly unknown.

There

There is great uncertainty, variety and obſcurity, in what ſhe either promiſes or threatens; old age exceped, which is an undoubted ſign of the approach of death. In all other accidents I ſee few ſigns of the futurity, whereon we may ground our divination. I only judge myſelf by my real ſenſation, and not by diſcourſe: To what end? ſince I am reſolved to bring nothing to it but expectation and patience. Will you know how much I get by this? Obſerve thoſe that do otherwiſe, and who rely upon ſo many different perſuaſions and counſels, how often, and how much they labour under imagination, excluſive of any bodily pain. I have many times pleaſed myſelf, being well when I have been ſafe, and delivered from theſe dangerous accidents, to communicate them to the phyſicians, as if they were then beginning to diſcover themſelves in me; where I underwent the terrible ſentences of their dreadful concluſions, being very well at eaſe; and I was the more obliged to the favour of God, and better ſatisfied of the vanity of this art.

There is nothing that ought ſo much to be recommended to youth as activity and vigilance. Our life is nothing but motion: I beſtir myſelf with great difficulty, and am ſlow in every thing, whether in riſing, going to bed, or eating. Seven of the clock in the morning is early for me; and where I govern, I never dine before eleven, nor ſup till after ſix. I have formerly attributed the cauſe of the fevers, and other diſeaſes I have fallen into, to the heavineſs and dulneſs that long ſleeping had brought upon me, and have ever repented my ſleeping again in the morning. Plato is more angry at the exceſs of ſleeping than that of drinking: I love to lie hard, and alone, even without my wife, as kings and princes do, but pretty well covered with cloaths. They never warm my bed, but ſince my being grown old, they give me for need warm cloaths to lay to my feet and ſtomach. The great Scipio, was branded for a great ſleeper; though in my opinion, for no other reaſon, but that men were diſpleaſed, that he was the only man in whom no other fault was to be found. If I have any thing delicate in my way of

living, 'tis rather in my lying, than any thing elſe; but generally, I give way, and accommodate myſelf as much as any one to neceſſity. Sleeping has taken up a great part of my life, and I yet continue at the age I now am, to ſleep eight or nine hours at a ſtretch.

I wean myſelf to my advantage, from this propenſion to ſloth, and am evidently better for ſo doing. I find the change a little hard indeed, but in three days it is over, and ſee but few that live with leſs ſleep, when need requires; and that more conſtantly exerciſe themſelves, nor to whom journeys are leſs troubleſome. My body is capable of a firm, but not of a violent or ſudden agitation. I avoid of late all violent excerciſes, and ſuch as incline me to ſweat, my limbs being weary before they are hot. I am uſed to be upon my legs a whole day together, and am never weary of walking: but from my youth, I never loved to ride upon pavements. On foot I go up to the breech in dirt, and indeed little fellows as I am, are ſubject in the ſtreets to be elbowed and juſtled, for want of preſence and ſtature, and I have ever loved to reſt myſelf, whether ſitting, or lying, with my heels as high, or higher than my ſeat.

There is no profeſſion ſo pleaſant as the military, a profeſſion both noble in its execution, (for valour is the ſtrongeſt, moſt ſuperb, and moſt generous of all virtues) and noble in its cauſe. There is no utility either more extenſive, or more juſt, than the protection of the peace and grandeur of a man's country. The company of ſo many noble, young and active men delights you; as does the ordinary ſight of ſo many tragic ſpectacles; and the freedom of their converſation without art, with a maſculine and unceremonious way of living. The variety of a thouſand different actions; the encouraging harmony of martial muſic, that raviſhes your ears and warms your ſouls; the honour of this exerciſe, nay even its ſeverity and hardſhips, which Plato ſo little accounts, that in his republic he makes women and children ſhare in them, are delightful to you. You put yourſelves voluntarily upon particular exploits and hazards, according as you judge of their luſtre

luſtre and importance, and ſee, when even life itſelf is therein excuſably employed,

Pulchrumque mori ſuccurrit in armis *.

How beautiful it is to die in arms.

To fear the common dangers that concern ſo great a multitude of men; not to dare to do what ſo many ſorts of ſouls, and a whole people dare to do, is for a heart that is effeminate, and mean beyond all meaſure. Company encourages even children. If others excel you in knowledge, in gracefulneſs, in ſtrength, or fortune, you have third cauſes to blame for that; but to give place to them in fortitude of mind, you can blame no one for that but yourſelf. Death is more abject, more languiſhing and painful in bed than in battle; and fevers and catarrhs, are as painful and mortal as a muſquet-ſhot: whoever is formed valiantly to bear the accidents of common life, would need no more courage to be a ſoldier. "Vivere, mi Lu-"cili, militare eſt †." *i. e.* 'Life, my Lucilius, is a 'warfare.'

I do not remember that I ever had the itch, and yet ſcratching is one of nature's ſweeteſt gratifications, and neareſt at hand, but the ſmart follows too cloſe. I uſe it moſt in my ears, which are often apt to itch.

I came into the world with all my ſenſes entire, even to perfection. My ſtomach is pretty good, as alſo is my head and my breath; and for the moſt part, they have continued themſelves ſo in ſpite of my fevers. I have paſt the age to which ſome nations, not without reaſon, have preſcribed ſo juſt a term of life, that they would not ſuffer men to exceed it; and yet I have ſome intervals, though ſhort and inconſtant, ſo bright, as are little inferior to the health and indolency of my youth: I do not mean vigour and ſpritelineſs, it being not reaſon that it ſhould follow me beyond its limits.

Non hoc amplius eſt liminis, aut aquæ
Cæleſtis patiens latus §.

* Æneid. lib. ii. v. 317. † Senec. ep. 96.
§ Hor. lib. iii. ode 10. v. 19.

In life I find it much too late
To ſtand all weathers at her gate.

My face and eyes preſently diſcover me. All my alterations begin there, and appear worſe than they really are. My friends often pity me, before I feel the cauſe in myſelf: my looking-glaſs does not fright me, for even in my youth it has befallen me more than once to change my countenance, to put on a troubled aſpect boding no good, without any great conſequence: inſomuch, that the phyſicians not finding any cauſe within, anſwerable to that outward alteration, attributed to the mind, and ſome ſecret paſſion that preyed upon my vitals; but they were deceived. If my body governed itſelf as well according to my wiſh, as my mind does, we ſhould move a little more at our eaſe. My mind was then not only free from trouble, but moreover full of ſatisfaction and joy, as it commonly is, half by complexion, and half by deſign.

Nec vitiant artus ægræ contagia mentis *.

——— I never yet could find,
That e'er my body ſuffer'd by my mind †.

I am of the opinion, that this temperature of my mind, has often raiſed my body from its lapſes: the latter is often oppreſſed; and if the former be not briſk and gay, it is at leaſt quiet and at reſt. I had a quartan ague four or five months, that made me look wretchedly, while my mind was always, if not calm, yet pleaſant; if the pain be without me, the weakneſs and languor do not much deject me: I have known ſeveral corporal faintings, that are ſhocking ſo much as to name, which yet I ſhould leſs fear than a thouſand paſſions and agitations of mind that I frequently ſee. I reſolve no more to run, 'tis enough that I crawl along; nor do I complain of the natural decay, that I feel in myſelf,

Quis

* Ovid. Triſt. lib. iii. el. 8. v. 24.

† Montaigne here interprets Ovid's words in a ſenſe oppoſite to what they carry in that poet; for what he plainly meant to ſay is, that his mind was not a ſufferer by any indiſpoſition of the body.

Quis tumidum guttur miratur in Alpibus *?

Who wonders to ſee a ſwell'd neck in the Alps?

nor regret, that my duration ſhall not be as long and entire as that of an oak.

I have no reaſon to complain of my imagination, for I have had few thoughts in my life which have ſo much as broke my ſleep, except thoſe of deſire, which have awaked without afflicting me: I dream but ſeldom, and then of chimæra's and fantaſtical things, commonly produced from pleaſant thoughts, rather ridiculous than ſad; and believe it to be true, that dreams are the true interpreters of our inclinations; but there is art required to ſort and underſtand them.

" Rex, quæ in vita uſurpant homines, cogitant,
" curant, vident †, Quæque aiunt vigilantes, agitant-
" que, ea ſi cui in ſomno accidunt, minus mirum eſt §."

i. e. ' 'Tis no wonder, O king, if what men are ac-
' cuſtomed to think, care for, ſee and ſay, when wak-
' ing, ſhould alſo run in their heads, when they are
' aſleep.'

Plato moreover ſays, that 'tis the office of prudence to draw inſtructions of divination of future things from dreams. I ſee nothing in it, except the wonderful experiments related of them by Socrates, Xenophon, and Ariſtotle, all men of irreproachable authority ‖. Hiſtorians ſay, that the people of Atlantis never dream, and that they alſo never eat any thing that had life: which I add, foraſmuch as it is peradventure the reaſon why they never dream; for Pythagoras ordered a certain preparation of diet, to beget proper dreams: Mine are very gentle, without any agitation of body, or expreſſion of voice. I have ſeen ſeveral of my time wonderfully diſturbed by them; Theon the philoſopher walked in his ſleep; as alſo did Pericles his ſervant, and that upon the very tiles and tops of the houſe ¶.

I

* Juven. Sat. 13. v. 162. † This is taken from a tragedy of Accius, intitled Brutus, where a ſoothſayer addreſſes Tarquin the ſuperb, one of the chief dramatis perſonæ. § Cicero de div. lib. i. c. 22. ‖ Herodot. lib. iv. p. 322.

¶ I knew a learned gentleman who affirmed, that the ſtories of the ſleep-walkers were true. In Mr. Menage's notes upon this

I hardly ever chuſe my diſh at table, but fall too on the next at hand, and unwillingly change it for another. The clutter of plates and ſervices diſpleaſes me as much as any other whatever. I am eaſily ſatisfied with little fare, and am an enemy to the opinion of Favorinus, that in the feaſt you muſt ſuffer the meat you like to be ſnatched, and another plate of another ſort to be ſet before you; and that it is a pitiful ſupper, if you do not ſtuff your gueſts with the rumps of various fowls; and that the Beccafico † only deſerves to be eaten entire. I uſually eat ſalt meats, yet I chuſe bread that has no ſalt in it; and my baker never ſends up other to my table, contrary to the cuſtom of the country. In my infancy, what they had moſt to correct in me, was the refuſal of things that children commonly beſt love, as ſugar, ſweet-meats, and marchpanes. My governor oppoſed this my averſion to dainty fare as a kind of nicety, and indeed 'tis nothing elſe but a difficulty of reliſhing any thing one taſtes. Whoever cures a child of a particular averſion to brown bread, bacon, or garlick, cures him of all kind of delicacy. There are ſome who pretend to work and live hard, that wiſh for powdered beef and bacon amongſt partridge; they have a good time on't; 'tis the delicacy of delicacies, 'tis the taſte of an effeminate fortune, that diſreliſhes ordinary things, "Per quæ luxu-"ria divitiarum tædio ludit §." To ceaſe to make good chear with what another does, and to be curious in what a man eats, is the eſſence of this vice.

Si modica cænare times olus omne patella ‖.

If you ſcorn not a ſallad in a mean diſh.

There

this place (in Diogenes Laert. in the life of Pyrrho, lib. ix. § 82.) we find a paſſage of Galen, where this learned phyſician tells us, that having heard of perſons walking in their ſleep, he did not believe a word of it, till being obliged once to travel on foot all night long, he was forced to believe it, by his own experience, &c. But, according to this principle, Galen gives us authority for not believing any thing at all of the matter, till we have experienced it as well as he. † A ſmall bird called a Fig-pecker, becauſe it feeds upon figs when they are ripe, eſpecially in Piedmont. It ſings like a Nightingale, and lives nine or ten years. § Seneca, epiſt. 18. ‖ Hor. lib. i. epiſt. 5. v. 2.

There is indeed this difference, that 'tis better to oblige a man's appetite in things that are moſt eaſy to be had, but 'tis always vice to oblige a man's ſelf. I formerly ſaid a kinſman of mine was nice, who, by being in our gallies, had unlearned the uſe of beds, and to put off his cloaths.

If I had any ſons, I ſhould wiſh them my fortune. The good father that God gave me, (who has nothing of me but the acknowledgment of his bounty, though turly 'tis a very hearty one) ſent me from my cradle to be brought up in a poor village of his, and there continued me all the while I was at nurſe, and longer, bringing me up to the meaneſt, and moſt common way of living: "Magna pars libertatis eſt bene moratus "venter *." *i. e.* 'A well governed belly is a great 'part of liberty.' Never take upon yourſelves, and much leſs give up to your wives, the care of their nurture, leave the forming them to fortune, under popular and natural laws; leave it to cuſtom to train them up to frugality and hardſhips, that they may rather deſcend from them, than aſcend to them. This humour of my father's yet aimed at another end, that is, to make me familiar with thoſe people, and with that rank of men who moſt need our aſſiſtance; believing that I ſhould be more obliged rather to regard them, who extended their arms to me, than thoſe who turned their backs upon me. And for this reaſon alſo it was, that he provided me ſureties at the font, of the meaneſt fortune, to oblige, and to bind me to them.

Neither has his deſign ſucceeded altogether ill, for, whether it be, becauſe there is more honour in ſuch a condeſcenſion, or out of natural compaſſion, which has a very great power over me, I have a kind inclination towards the meaner ſort of people. The faction which I condemn in our civil wars, I ſhall more ſharply condemn when I ſee them flouriſh and proſper. It will half reconcile me to them, when I ſhall ſee them miſerable, and ſuppreſt. How much do I admire the generous humour of Chelonis †, daughter and wife to the

* Seneca, epiſt. 123. † The reader will be pleaſed to turn to what Plutarch relates of this generous princeſs in the life of Agis and Cleomenes, ch. 5.

the kings of Sparta! Whilſt her huſband Cleombrotus, in the commotion of her city, had the advantage over Leonidas, her father, ſhe, like a good daughter, ſtuck cloſe to her father in all his miſery and exile, in oppoſition to the conqueror. But ſo ſoon as the chance of war turned, ſhe changed her will with the chance of fortune, and bravely turned to her huſband's ſide, whom ſhe accompanied whereſoever his ruin carried him: having, as it appears, no other choice, than to cleave to that ſide which ſtood moſt in need of her, and where ſhe beſt manifeſted her compaſſion. I am naturally more apt to follow the example of Flaminius, who was more ready to give his aſſiſtance to thoſe who had need of him, than to thoſe who had power to do him good; than the example of Pyrrhus, who was of an humour to ſtoop to the great, and to domineer over the meaneſt ſort of people.

Long ſittings at table make me uneaſy, and do me harm; for, whether it be for want of more continency, having accuſtomed myſelf to it from a child, I eat all the while I ſit. Therefore, at my own houſe, tho' the meals there are of the ſhorteſt, I chuſe to ſit down a little while after the reſt, as Auguſtus uſed to do; but I do not imitate him in riſing alſo before the reſt of the company: on the contrary, I love to ſit ſtill a long time after, and to hear the gueſts talk, provided I am none of the talkers; for I tire and hurt myſelf with ſpeaking upon a full ſtomach, as much as I find it pleaſant and very wholſome to argue, and to ſtrain my voice before meals.

The antient Greeks and Romans had more reaſon than we, in ſetting apart for eating, which is a principal action of life, (if not diverted by other extraordinary buſineſs) many hours, and the greateſt part of the night, eating and drinking more deliberately than we do, who perform all our actions in poſt haſte; and in extending this natural pleaſure to more leiſure and better uſe, intermixing with their meals ſeveral pleaſant and profitable offices of converſation.

They whoſe buſineſs it is to take care of me, may eaſily hinder me from eating any thing they think will do

do me harm; for in ſuch things I never covet nor miſs any thing I do not ſee. But withal, if it once comes in my ſight, 'tis in vain to perſuade me to forbear, ſo that when I deſign to faſt, I muſt be parted from thoſe that eat ſuppers, and muſt have only ſo much given me, as is required for a regular collation; for if I ſit down to table, I forget my reſolution. When I order my cook to alter the manner of dreſſing any diſh of meat, all my family know that it means, that my ſtomach is out of order, and that I ſhall not touch it.

I love to have all meats that will endure it underdreſſed, and love them kept till they are ſtinking. Nothing but hardneſs generally offends me; (of any other quality I am as patient and indifferent as any man I have known) ſo that contrary to the common humour, even in fiſh, it oft happens, that I think them both too freſh and too firm: not for want of teeth, which I ever had good, even to excellence, and that which age does but now begin to threaten. I have been uſed to rub them with a napkin every morning, and before and after dinner. God is favourable to thoſe from whom he takes life by degrees; 'tis the only benefit of old age; the laſt death will be ſo much the leſs viſible and painful; it will kill but a quarter of a man; or but half a one at moſt. I have one tooth lately fallen out without drawing, and without pain: it was the natural term of its duration. Both that part of my being, and ſeveral others, are already dead, and others half dead, of thoſe that were moſt active, and in higheſt eſteem during my vigorous years; ſo that I melt and ſteal away from myſelf. What a folly would it be in my underſtanding to apprehend the height of this fall, already ſo much advanced, as if it were from the utmoſt precipice? I hope I ſhall not. Indeed I receive a principal conſolation in the thoughts of my death, that it will be juſt and natural, and that henceforward I cannot herein either require or hope from deſtiny any favour that is not unlawful. Men make themſelves believe that their anceſtors were taller and had longer lives. But they deceive themſelves; and Solon, who was of thoſe

old

old times, does nevertheleſs limit the longeſt duration of life to threeſcore and ten years. I, who have ſo much and ſo univerſally adored this ἄριστον μέτρον *i. e.* 'the golden mean of the antient times;' and, who have concluded the middle meaſure to be the moſt perfect, ſhall I claim to live to an exceeding old age? Whatever happens contrary to the courſe of nature, may be troubleſome, but what comes according to her, muſt always be pleaſant. "Omnia, quæ ſecundum "naturam fiunt, ſunt habenda in bonis*." *i. e.* 'All 'things that are done according to nature, are to be 'accounted good.' And ſo Plato likewiſe ſays, that the death which is occaſioned by wounds and diſeaſes is violent; but that which old age leads us to is of all others the moſt eaſy, and in ſome ſort delightful. "Vitam adoleſcentibus vis aufert, ſenibus maturitas†." *i. e.* 'Young men are taken away by force, old men 'by maturity.' Death mixes and confounds itſelf throughout with life; decay anticipates its hour, and even increaſes as we grow up. I have pictures of myſelf taken at twenty-five, and thirty-five years of age; I compare them with that lately drawn, how often is it no more I, how much more is my preſent image unlike the former, and how unlike to that I ſhall go out of the world withal? It is too great an abuſe of nature, to harraſs her ſo that ſhe muſt be forced to leave us; and to abandon our conduct, our eyes, teeth, legs, and all the reſt, to the mercy of a foreign and begged aſſiſtance; and to reſign ourſelves into the hands of art, when ſhe is weary of following us. I am not very fond either of ſallets, or fruits, except melons. My father hated all ſorts of ſauces, and I love them all. Eating too much is a clog to me, but for the quality of what I eat, I do not yet certainly know that any ſort of meat hurts me; neither have I obſerved that either full moon or decreaſe, Spring or Autumn, alter me. We have in us motions that are inconſtant, and for which we can not account. For example I found radiſhes firſt agreeable, afterwards nauſeous, and now again grateful. In ſeveral other things like-

* Cicero de Senec. c. 19. † Ibid.

likewiſe I find my ſtomach and appetite to vary after the ſame manner. I have changed and changed again from white-wine to claret, from claret to white-wine.

I am a great lover of fiſh, and conſequently make my faſts feaſts, and my feaſts faſts; and believe what ſome people ſay, that it is more eaſy of digeſtion than fleſh. As I make a conſcience of eating fleſh upon fiſh days, ſo does my taſte make a ſcruple of mixing fiſh and fleſh, the difference betwixt them ſeeming to me to be too great.

From my youth I have uſed ſometimes to ſlip my meals, either to ſharpen my appetite againſt the next day, (for as Epicurus faſted and lived on meagre food, to accuſtom his pleaſure to make ſhift without abundance, I on the contrary do it to prepare my pleaſure to make chearful uſe of abundance) or elſe I faſted to preſerve my vigour for the ſervice of ſome action of body or mind; for both the one and the other are cruelly dulled in my repletion, (and above all things, I hate that fooliſh coupling of ſo healthful and ſpritely a goddeſs with that little indigeſted belching deity, all over bloated by the fume of the liquor) or to cure my ſick ſtomach, and for want of fit company. For I ſay as the ſame Epicurus did, that a man is not ſo much to regard what he eats, as with whom; and I commend Chilo *, for not engaging himſelf to be at Periander's feaſt, till he firſt was informed who were to be the other gueſts. No diſh is ſo acceptable to me, nor no ſauce ſo alluring, as that which is extracted from ſociety. I think it to be more wholſome to eat leſs at a time and often: but I deſire to make the moſt of appetite and hunger. I ſhould take no pleaſure to be ſtinted in the phyſical way to three or four pitiful meals a day. Who will aſſure me, that if I have a good appetite in the morning, I ſhall have the ſame at ſupper? But eſpecially, let us old fellows take the firſt opportunity of eating, and leave hopes and prognoſtics to the makers of almanacks. The utmoſt fruit of my health is pleaſure; let us take hold of the firſt that offers. I avoid conſtancy in theſe laws of faſting. Whoever de-

* In Plutarch's banquet of the ſeven wiſe men.

ſires that one form ſhall ſerve him, let him avoid the continuing of it: we harden ourſelves in it; our faculties are laid aſleep by it; ſix months after, you ſhall find your ſtomach ſo uſed to it, that all your gain will be the loſs of your liberty of doing otherwiſe, but to your prejudice.

I never keep my legs and thighs warmer in winter than in ſummer; one ſingle pair of ſilk ſtockings is all: I have ſuffered myſelf to keep my head warmer for the relief of my rheums, and my belly upon the account of my colick: my diſeaſes were in a few days habituated to it, and diſdained my ordinary proviſions. I roſe from a ſingle cap to a napkin, and from a napkin cap to a quilted one. The waddings of my doublet ſerve only for ſhow; they ſignify nothing, if I do not add a hare's ſkin or that of a vultur, and wear a cap under my hat. Follow this gradation, and you will go a fine length. I am reſolved to proceed no further, and would leave off thoſe too, if I durſt. If you fall into any new inconvenience, all this is labour loſt; you are accuſtomed to it; ſeek out ſome other way: thus do ſuch ruin themſelves, who ſubmit to be fettered, and ſuperſtitiouſly confined to rules. They are for adding ſomething more, and ſomething more after that, ſo that there is no end on't.

As for our occupations and pleaſures, it is more commodious, as the antients did, to loſe a dinner, and defer making good cheer, till the hour of retirement and repoſe, without breaking into the day; and ſo was I formerly uſed to do. For health, I ſince by experience find on the contrary, that it is better to dine, and that the digeſtion is better performed waking. I am not very apt to be thirſty, either well or ſick, my mouth is indeed apt to be dry, but without thirſt; and commonly I never drink but from a deſire that is created by eating, and when I have gone a good way in my meal. I drink pretty well for a man of the common ſort: in ſummer, and at a hungry meal, I do not only exceed the limits of Auguſtus, who drank juſt thrice and no more; but not to offend Democrates his rule, who forbad that men ſhould ſtop at four times, as an unluc-

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ky number, I proceed when need requires to the fifth glaſs, in all about three half pints. For the little glaſſes are my favourites; and I love to drink them off at once, which other people avoid as indecent. I mix my wine moſt commonly with half, ſometimes one third part water; and when I am at home, by an antient cuſtom that my father's phyſician preſcribed both to him, and to himſelf, they mix that which is deſigned for me in the pantry two or three hours before it is brought in. 'Tis ſaid, that Cranaus king of Athens was the inventor of this cuſtom of daſhing wine with water; whether profitable or no, I have heard diſputed. I think it more decent and wholſome for children to drink no wine till after ſixteen or eighteen years of age. The moſt uſual and common method of living is the moſt becoming: all particularity is in my opinion to be avoided, and I ſhould as much hate a German that mixed water with his wine, as I ſhould do a Frenchman who drank it pure. Common cuſtom gives the law in thoſe things.

I fear a foggy air, and fly from ſmoak, as from the plague, (the firſt repairs I fell upon in my own houſe were the chimnies and privies, a common and inſupportable defect in all old buildings) and amongſt the hardſhips of war, reckon the choaking duſt, with which we are ſmothered a whole day together. I have a free and eaſy reſpiration, and my colds for the moſt part go off without offence to the lungs, and without a cough.

The ſevere heat of ſummer is more an enemy to me than the cold of winter; for, beſides the incommodity of heat, not ſo remediable as cold, and beſides the force with which the ſun-beams dart upon the head, all their glaring light offends my eyes, ſo that I could not now ſit at dinner over againſt a great fire.

To dull the whiteneſs of paper, in thoſe times when I was more uſed to read, I laid a piece of glaſs upon my book, and found my eyes much relieved by it. I am to this hour ignorant of the uſe of ſpectacles, and can ſee as far as ever I did, or as any other perſon. 'Tis true that in the evening I begin to find a

little trouble and weakneſs in my ſight, if I read; an exerciſe that always ſtrained my eyes, eſpecially by night. Here is one ſtep backwards, and a very ſenſible one; I ſhall fall back another, from the ſecond to the third, and ſo to the fourth, ſo gently, that I ſhall be ſtark blind before I ſhall be ſenſible of the age and decay of my ſight: ſo artificially do the fatal ſiſters untwiſt the thread of our lives. And yet I doubt that my hearing begins to grow thick, and you will ſee I ſhall have half loſt it, when I ſhall lay the fault on the voices of thoſe that ſpeak to me. The ſoul muſt be exceedingly intent to be ſenſible how it ebbs away. My walking is quick and firm, and I know not which of the two, my mind, or my body, I have moſt to do to keep in the ſame ſtate. That preacher is very much my friend, that can oblige my attention a whole ſermon through. In places of ceremony, where every one's countenance is ſo ſtarched, where I have ſeen the ladies keep even their eyes ſo fixt; I could never order it ſo, that ſome part or other of me did not laſh out; ſo that though I was ſet, I was never ſettled: as the philoſopher Chryſippus * his chamber-maid ſaid of her maſter, that he was only drunk in his legs, for it was his cuſtom to be always kicking them about in what place ſoever he ſate, and ſhe ſaid it at a time when though the wine made all his companions drunk, he found no alteration in himſelf at all; the ſame may alſo be ſaid of me from my infancy, that I have either folly or quickſilver in my feet, ſo much reſtleſſneſs and unſettledneſs there is in them wherever they are placed.

'Tis indecent, beſides the hurt it doth to one's health, and even to the pleaſure of eating, to eat ſo greedily as I do: I oft bite my tongue, and ſometimes my fingers for haſte. Diogenes meeting a boy eating after that manner, gave his tutor a box o'the ear. There were men at Rome that taught people to chew, as well as to walk, with a good grace. I thereby loſe the opportunity of ſpeaking, which gives ſo ſweet a reliſh to meals, provided the table-talk be pleaſant and ſhort.

There

* Diog. Laert. in the life of Chryſippus, lib. vii.

There is jealouſy and envy amongſt our pleaſures, they croſs and hinder one another. Alcibiades, a man well verſed in making good cheer, baniſhed even muſic from tables, that it might not diſturb the pleaſure of diſcourſe, for a reaſon he had from Plato, viz. that it is the cuſtom of vulgar men to call fidlers and ſinging-men to feaſts, for want of good diſcourſe and pleaſant talk, with which men of underſtanding know how to regale one another. Varro requires this in great entertainments, perſons of graceful preſence, and agreeable converſation, that are neither mute nor rattles; neatneſs and delicacy both of place and proviſions, and fair weather. A good treat is neither ſlightly artificial, nor a little voluptuous; neither the greateſt captains, nor the greateſt philoſophers, have diſdained the uſe and ſcience of eating well. My imagination has delivered three to my memory, which fortune rendered ſovereignly ſweet to me upon divers occaſions, in my moſt flouriſhing age. My preſent ſtate excludes me from more. For every one according to the good temper of body and mind wherein he then finds himſelf, furniſhes to his own uſe a particular grace and liking; I, who but juſt crawl upon the earth, hate this inhuman wiſdom, that will have us deſpiſe and hate all culture of body. I look upon it to be as unjuſt to hate natural pleaſures, as to be too fond of them. Xerxes was ſuch a fool that when environed with all human pleaſures, he propoſed a reward to him that could find him out a new one; and he is not leſs ſo, who denies himſelf any of thoſe pleaſures that nature has provided for him. A man ſhould neither purſue nor fly, but receive them. I receive them, I confeſs, a little too affectionately and kindly, and eaſily ſuffer myſelf to follow my natural inclination. We need not exaggerate their vanity, they themſelves ſhew it, and make us ſufficiently ſenſible of it. Thanks be to our ſickly minds that pall our joys, and put us out of taſte with them, as with themſelves, they entertain both themſelves and all they receive, one while better, and another while worſe, according to their inſatiable, vagabond, and variable eſſence.

Sincerum eſt niſi vas, quodcunque infundis, aceſcit *.

All pleaſures ſhun with ſorrow in their train,
For tainted veſſels ſour what they contain.

I, who boaſt that I ſo curiouſly and particularly embrace the conveniencies of life, do find, when I nicely conſider them, but very little in them more than wind. But what? We are all wind throughout; and moreover, the wind itſelf loves to bluſter and ſhift from corner to corner more diſcreetly than we, and contents itſelf with its proper offices, without deſiring ſtability and ſolidity, qualities that nothing belong to it.

The pure pleaſures, as well as the pure diſpleaſures of the imagination, ſay ſome, are the greateſt; as was expreſſed by the balance of Critolaus †. 'Tis no wonder; it makes them to its own liking, and cuts what it pleaſes out of the whole cloth; of which I every day ſee notable examples, and peradventure to be deſired. But I, who am of a mixt and heavy conſtitution, cannot ſnap ſo ſoon at this one ſimple object, but I negligently ſuffer myſelf to be blindly carried away with the preſent pleaſures of the general human law. Intellectually ſenſible, and ſenſibly intellectual. The Cyrenaick philoſophers will have it, that as corporal pains, ſo corporal pleaſures are more powerful, both as double, and as more juſt. There are ſome, as Ariſtotle ſays, who out of a ſavage kind of ſtupidity pretend to diſguſt them: and I know others, who out of ambition do the ſame. Why do they not moreover forſwear breathing? Why do they not live of their own, and refuſe light becauſe it ſhines gratis, and coſts them neither pains nor invention? Let Mars, Pallas, or Mercury, afford them their light by which to ſee, inſtead of Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus. Will they not ſeek the quadrature of the circle, even in their conjugal embraces? I hate that we ſhould be enjoined to have our minds in the clouds when our bodies are at table; I would not have the mind rivetted there, nor that it

* Hor. lib. i. ep. 2. v. 54.

† In my opinion Montaigne here applies this balance to a purpoſe very different from that which Critolaus applied it to, if we may judge of this balance, by what Cicero ſays of it. Tuſc. quæſt. lib. v. c. 27.

it ſhould be roving, but I am willing it ſhould apply itſelf to that place, that it ſhould ſit, but not lie down there. Ariſtippus pleaded only for the body, as if we had no ſoul; Zeno ſtickled only for the ſoul, as if we had no body. Both of them were in the wrong. Pythagoras, ſay they, adhered to a philoſophy that was all contemplation; Socrates to one that was all manners and action. Plato found out a medium betwixt both; but they only ſay ſo for talk ſake; for the true mean is found in Socrates; and Plato is more Socratick than Pythagorean, and it becomes him better. When I dance, I dance; when I ſleep, I ſleep. Nay, and when I walk alone in a beautiful orchard, if my thoughts are ſome part of the time taken up with foreign occurrences, I call them back again to my walk, or to the orchard, to the ſweetneſs of the ſolitude, and to myſelf.

Nature has with a motherly tenderneſs obſerved this, that the actions ſhe has enjoined us for our neceſſity ſhould be alſo pleaſant to us, and invites us to them, not only by reaſon, but alſo by appetite: and it is injuſtice to prevent her laws. When I ſee both Cæſar and Alexander in the moſt weighty concerns of their great buſineſs, ſo fully enjoy human and corporal pleaſures, I do not ſay that they unbent their minds, but ſtrained them higher; ſubjecting thoſe violent employments and laborious thoughts by the ſtrength of courage, to the cuſtom of common life. Wiſe, had they believed that the former was their ordinary, the latter, their extraordinary vocation. We are great fools. He has paſt over his life in indolence, ſay we: I have done nothing to-day. What! have you not lived? 'Tis not only the fundamental, but the moſt illuſtrious of your occupations. Had I been put to the management of great affairs, I ſhould have made it ſeen what I could do. Have you known how to meditate, and manage your life? You have performed the greateſt work of all. For a man to ſhew, and ſet himſelf off, nature has no need of fortune; ſhe equally ſhews herſelf in all degrees, and behind a curtain, as well as without one. Have you known how to compoſe your manners?

You

You havs done a great deal more than he who has compoſed books. Have you known how to take repoſe? You have done more than he who has taken cities and empires.

The glorious maſter-piece of man is to know how to live to purpoſe: all other things, viz. to reign, to lay up treaſure, and to build, are at the moſt but little appendixes, and ſmall props. I take a delight to ſee a general of an army at the foot of a breach he intends preſently to aſſault, give himſelf up entire and free at dinner, to talk and be merry with his friends; and to ſee Brutus, when heaven and earth conſpired againſt him and the Roman liberty, ſtealing ſome hour of the night from his rounds to read and abridge Polybius, void of all fear. 'Tis for little ſouls, that are cruſhed under the weight of affairs, not to know how cleverly to diſengage themſelves, and not to know how to lay them aſide, and take them up again.

O fortes, pejoraque paſſi,
Mecum ſæpe viri, nunc vino pellite curas.
Cras ingens iterabimus æquor *.

Brave ſpirits, who with me have felt worſe ſorrow,
Drink cares away, we'll ſail again to-morrow.

Whether it be in jeſt or earneſt, that the Theological and Sorbonical wine, and their feaſts, are turned into a proverb, I think it but reaſon, they ſhould dine ſo much more commodiouſly and pleaſantly, as they have profitably and ſeriouſly employed the morning in the exerciſe of their ſchools, the conſcience of having well ſpent the other hours in the juſt and ſavoury ſauce of tables. The ſages lived ſo, and that inimitable emulation for virtue, which aſtoniſhes us both in the one and the other Cato, that humour of theirs, ſevere even to importunity, is thus gently ſubmitted, and made pliant to the laws of the human condition, both of Venus and Bacchus; and according to the precepts of their ſect, that require the perfect wiſe man ſhould be as expert an intelligent in the uſe of pleaſures, as in

* Hor. lib. i. ode 7. v. 30.

in all other duties of life. "Cui cor ſapiat, ei et ſapiat "Palatus *.

Relaxation and affability do, methinks, wonderfully honour, and beſt become a great and generous ſoul. Epaminondus did not think, that to dance, ſing, and be intent upon play with the boys of the city, derogated from the honour of his glorious victories, and the perfect reformation of manners that was in him. And amongſt ſo many admirable actions of Scipio, the grandfather, a perſon worthy the opinion of a heavenly extraction, there is nothing that gives him a greater grace than to ſee him indolently and childiſhly trifling, in gathering and chuſing ſhells, and playing at quoits upon the ſea-ſhore with Lælius: and, if it was foul weather, amuſing and pleaſing himſelf in writing comedies, repreſenting the meaneſt and moſt popular actions of mankind: and while his head was full of that wonderful enterprize of Hannibal and Africa, viſiting the ſchools in Sicily, and being preſent at the philoſophical lectures, even ſo as to attract the blind envy of his enemies at Rome. Nor is there any thing more remarkable in Socrates, than that, old as he was, he found time to learn dancing, and playing upon inſtruments, and thought it well ſpent; nevertheleſs, this very man was ſeen in an extaſy ſtanding upon his feet a whole day and a night together in the preſence of all the Grecian army, ſurpriſed and tranſported with ſome profound thought. He was the firſt, who among ſo many valiant men of the army, ran to the relief of Alcibiades, overpowered by the enemy, ſcreened him with his own body, and diſengaged him from the croud, by abſolute force of arms. It was he who, in the Delian battle relieved and ſaved Xenophon, when diſmounted from his horſe; and who, amongſt all the people of Athens, enraged as he was at ſo unworthy a ſpectacle, firſt preſented himſelf to reſcue Theramenes, whom the thirty tyrants were haling to execution by their guards; and he deſiſted not from his bold enterprize, but at the remonſtrance of Theramenes himſelf, though he was only followed by two more in all. He has been ſeen, when courted by a beauty,

* Cicero de finibus, Bon. et Mal. lib. ii. c. 9.

beauty, with whom he was deeply in love, yet maintained a ſevere abſtinence in time of need. He has been ſeen continually to go to the war, and with his bare feet to travel upon the ice; to wear the ſame garb winter and ſummer; to ſurpaſs all his companions in bearing hardſhips; and to eat no more at a feaſt, than at his own private dinner. He was known twenty ſeven years together to endure hunger, poverty, the untractableneſs of his children, and the ſcratches of his wife, with the ſame countenance; and in the end calumny, tyranny, impriſonment, fetters, and poiſon. But was that man invited to drink bumpers by any rule of civility? He was alſo the man of the army to whom the advantage of it remained. And he never refuſed to play at cobnut, nor to ride the hobby-horſe with the boys, and it became him well; for all actions, ſays philoſophy, equally become, and equally honour a wiſe man. We have enough wherewithal to do it, and we ought never to be weary of repreſenting the image of this great man in all the patterns and forms of perfection. There are very few examples of life full and pure, and we wrong our inſtruction to propoſe to ourſelves every day, ſuch as are weak and imperfect, ſcarce good for any one ſervice, and ſuch as draw us rather back, and that are rather corruptors than correctors of manners. The people deceive themſelves; a man goes much more eaſily indeed by the ends, where the extremity ſerves for a bound, a ſtop, and a guide, than by the middle way, which is large and open, and more according to art, than according to nature; but withal much leſs nobly and commendably.

Magnanimity conſiſts not ſo much in mounting and in proceeding forward, as in knowing how to govern and circumſcribe itſelf. It takes every thing for great, that is enough; and demonſtrates itſelf better in moderate, than eminent things. There is nothing ſo handſome and lawful, as well and duly to act the part of the man; nor any ſcience ſo difficult, as well to know how to live this life; and of all our infirmities, it is the moſt ſavage, to deſpiſe our being.

Who-

Whoever has a mind to ſend his ſoul abroad, when the body is ill at eaſe, to preſerve it from the contagion, let him do it if he can: but otherwiſe on the contrary, let the ſoul favour and aſſiſt the body, and not refuſe to participate of its natural pleaſures, and with a conjugal complacency; uſing withal, if it be a wiſe ſoul, moderation, leſt by indiſcretion they ſhould be confounded with vexation. Intemperance is the peſt of pleaſure, and temperance is not its ſcourge, but rather its ſeaſoning. Eudoxus *, who therein eſtabliſhed the ſovereign good, and his companions, who ſet ſo high a value upon it, taſted it in its moſt charming ſweetneſs by the means of temperance, which in them was ſingular and exemplary †.

I enjoin my ſoul to look upon pain and pleaſure with an eye equally regulated and ſtedfaſt; "Eodem enim "vitio eſt effuſio animi in lætitia, quo in dolore con- "tractio §:" *i. e.* 'The overflowing of the heart in 'mirth, is as bad as the contracting of it in ſorrow;' but on the one gaily, and on the other gravely, as far as it is able, to be as careful to extinguiſh the one, as to extend the other. The judging rightly of good, brings along with it the judging ſoundly of evil. Pain has ſomething not to be avoided in its tender beginning, and pleaſure has ſomething that may be avoided in its exceſſive end. Plato couples them together ‖, and will have it that it ſhould be equally the office of fortitude to fight againſt pain, and againſt the immoderate and charming blandiſhments of pleaſure. They are two fountains, from which whoever draws, when and as much as he needs, whether city, man or beaſt, is very happy. The firſt is to be taken phyſically, and upon neceſſity more ſparingly; the other for thirſt, but not to drunkenneſs. Pain, pleaſure, love and hatred, are the firſt things that a child is ſenſible of; if when his reaſon comes they are applied to it, that is virtue.

I have

* As Diog. Laert. affirms in the life of Eudoxus (lib. viii. § 88) on the report of Nicomachus, the ſon of Ariſtotle.

† Ariſtotle poſitively ſays that Eudoxus was diſtinguiſhed by his extraordinary temperance. Moral. ad Nicomachum, lib. x. c. 2.

§ Cicero Tuſc. lib. iv. c. 31.

‖ In his dialogue of the laws, lib. i. p. 636.

I have a dictionary to myſelf, I ſquander away my time when it is ill and uneaſy; but when 'tis good, I will not ſquander it away. I run it over again, and ſtick to it; a man muſt run over the ill, and ſettle upon the good. This ordinary phraſe of paſtime, and paſſing away the time, repreſents the cuſtom of thoſe wiſe people, who think they cannot fare better than to let life run on and ſlide away, to paſs it over, to kill it, and as much as they can, to take no notice of it, and to ſteal from it, as a thing of troubleſome and contemptible quality: But I know it to be another kind of thing, and find it both valuable and commodious, even in its lateſt decay, wherein I now enjoy it: And nature has delivered it into our hands in ſuch and ſo favourable circumſtances, that we need only thank ourſelves if it be troubleſome to us, or ſlide unprofitably away. "Stulti vita ingrata eſt, trepida eſt, tota in futurum "fertur *." *i. e.* 'The life of a fool is uneaſy, timor-'ous, and wholly bent upon futurity.' Nevertheleſs, I compoſe myſelf to loſe mine without regret, but withal, as a thing that is periſhable by its condition, not that it is troubleſome or uneaſy to me. Neither does it properly well become any, to welcome death, excepting ſuch as are fond of life. There is good huſbandry in enjoying it. I enjoy it double to what others do; for the meaſure of the fruition depends more or leſs upon our application of it. Now, eſpecially, that I perceive mine to be ſo ſhort in time, I am inclined to extend it in weight: I will ſtop the quickneſs of its flight †, by the ſuddenneſs of my graſping it: and by the vigour of uſing it, make myſelf amends for the haſte in which it runs away. By how much the poſſeſſion

* Seneca, epiſt. 15.

† This perhaps furniſhed the hint for the following merry French catch, viz.

Plus inconſtant que l'onde et la Nuage,
Le temps s'enfuit: pourquoi le regretter?

Malgre la pente volage
Que l'oblige à nous quitter,
En faire l'uſage c'eſt l'arreter.
Goutons mille douceurs:
Et ſi la vie eſt un paſſge,
Sur ce paſſage au moins ſemons des fleurs.

poſſeſſion of life is more ſhort, I muſt take the deeper and the fuller hold of it. Others are ſenſible of the ſweetneſs of contentment, and of proſperity; I feel it too, as well as they, but not as it ſlides and paſſes by; for a man ought to ſtudy, taſte, and ruminate upon it, to render due thanks for it to him that grants it to us. They enjoy the other pleaſures as they do that of ſleep, without knowing them; and to the end, that even ſleep itſelf ſhould not ſo ſtupidly paſs me unnoticed, I have formerly cauſed myſelf to be diſturbed in it, to the end that I might take a view of it. I ponder with myſelf upon contentment; I do not ſkim over it, but ſound it, and bend my reaſon, now grown perverſe and diſguſted, to recover it. Do I find myſelf in any calm ſituation? Is there any pleaſure that tickles me? I do not ſuffer it to cheat my ſenſes. I aſſociate my ſoul to it, not to be abſorbed in it, but to take delight in it; not to loſe itſelf, but to find itſelf in it; and I employ it on its part to view itſelf in this proſperous eſtate, to weigh, eſteem, and amplify its happineſs. It computes how much it ſtands indebted to almighty God that its conſcience, and other inteſtine paſſions are at reſt, that the body is in its natural diſpoſition, orderly and competently enjoying the delicate and flattering functions, by which he is graciouſly pleaſed to recompenſe the ſufferings wherewith his juſtice in its turn ſcourges us. How great a benefit is it to man to have his ſoul ſo ſeated, that which way ſoever ſhe turns her eye, the heaven is calm about her? No deſire, no fear or doubt, that troubles its aſpect, nor any difficulty paſt, preſent, or to come, which his imagination may not paſs over, without offence. This conſideration takes great luſtre from the compariſon of different conditions; and therefore it is, that I propoſe to myſelf in a thouſand faces, thoſe whom fortune, or their own error, torments and carries away; and moreover thoſe, who more like to me, ſo negligently and careleſly receive their good fortune. They are men who paſs away their time indeed, they run over the preſent, and that which they poſſeſs, to give themſelves up to hope, and to the ſhadows and vain images, which fancy places before them,

Morte obita quales fama eſt volitare figuras,
Aut quæ ſopitos deludunt ſomnia ſenſus *;

Such forms they ſay as dead men's ſpirits have,
Or which in dreams our drowſy ſenſe deceive.

and which haſten and prolong their flight, according as they are purſued. The fruit and aim of their purſuit is to purſue; as Alexander ſaid, that the end of his labour, was to labour.

Nil actum credens cum quid ſupereſſet agendum †.

Thinking nought done, if aught was left to do.

For my part therefore I love life, and cultivate it, ſuch as it has pleaſed God to beſtow upon us; I do not offer to wiſh it had no neceſſity of eating and drinking; and I ſhould think my offence as inexcuſable, to wiſh it had been double to what it is. "Sapiens divitiarum naturalium quæſitor acerrimus §." *i. e.* 'A wiſe man hunts 'ſharply after natural riches.' Nor that we ſhould ſupport ourſelves by putting only a little of that drug into our mouths by which Epimenides took away his appetite, and kept himſelf alive; nor that a man ſhould ſtupidly produce children, with his fingers or heels, but rather with reverence I ſpeak it, that he might voluptuouſly produce them with his fingers and heels; nor that the body ſhould be without deſire, and void of delight. Theſe are ungrateful and wicked complaints. I accept kindly and gratefully, what nature has done for me; am well pleaſed with it, and proud of it. A man does wrong to the great and almighty giver of all things, to refuſe, diſannul, or diſfigure his gift; he has made every thing well. "Omnia quæ ſecundum naturam ſunt eſtimatione digna ſunt ‖" *i. e.* 'All things that are according to nature are worthy of 'eſteem.'

Of

* Æneid. lib. x. ver. 641.

† Lucan. lib. ii. v. 657. The poet ſpeaks here of Cæſar, who was altogether as active and indefatigable as Alexander.

§ Seneca, epiſt. 119. ‖ Cicero de finib. lib. iii. c. 6. We find the ſenſe here to be the ſame, tho' not the very words quoted by Montaigne.

Of philoſophical opinions, I more willingly embrace thoſe that are moſt ſolid, that is to ſay, the moſt humane, and moſt our own: my diſcourſes are ſuitable to my manners, low and humble: philoſophy brings forth a child to my liking, when it puts itſelf upon its Ergo's, to prove that it is a ſavage alliance to match divine with earthly, rational with irrational, ſevere with indulgent, and the honeſt with diſhoneſt; that pleaſure is a brutiſh quality, unworthy to be taſted by a wiſe man; that the ſole pleaſure which he extracts from the enjoyment of a fair young wife, is the pleaſure of his conſcience to perform an action according to order: as to put on his boots for a profitable journey. Oh, that his followers had no more right, nor nerves, nor juice, in getting their wives maidenheads, than there is in his lectures.

This is not what Socrates ſays, who is both his maſter and ours. He values, as he ought, bodily pleaſure, but he prefers that of the mind, as having more force, conſtancy, facility, variety and dignity. This according to him goes by no means alone, he is not ſo fantaſtic, but only it goes firſt. Temperance in him is the moderatrix, not the adverſary of pleaſures. Nature is a gentle guide, but not more gentle, than prudent and juſt. "Intrandum eſt in rerum naturam, et penitus "quid ea poſtulet, pervidendum *." *i. e.* 'A man muſt 'ſearch into the nature of things, and examine 'thoroughly what ſhe requires.' I every where ſearch for the print of her foot, but we have confounded it with artificial traces. And that ſovereign academic and peripatetic good, which is to live according to nature, becomes by this means hard to limit and explain; and that of the Stoicks, bordering upon it, which is to conſent to nature. Is it not an error to eſteem any actions leſs worthy, becauſe they are neceſſary? Yet they ſhall not beat it out of my head, that it is not a ſuitable marriage of pleaſure with neceſſity, to which ſays an antient, the Gods do always conſent. To what end do we diſmember by divorce, a fabric connected by ſo mutual and fraternal a correſpondence: Let us, on the contrary renew it by mutual offices, let the

* Cicero de fin. lib. v. c. 16.

mind rouze and quicken the dulneſs of the body, and the body ſtop and fix the levity of the ſoul. "Qui "velut ſummum bonum, laudat animæ naturam, et "tanquam malum, naturam carnis accuſat, profecto "et animam carnaliter appetit, et carnem carnaliter "fugit, quoniam id vanitate ſentit humana, non veri-"tate divina *." *i. e.* 'He who commends the nature 'of the ſoul as the ſupreme good, and accuſes the 'nature of the fleſh as evil, does certainly both car-'nally affect the ſoul, and carnally flies the fleſh, be-'cauſe he is poſſeſſed by ſuch belief through human 'vanity, and not by divine truth.' In this preſent that God has made us, there is nothing unworthy our care; we are ſtrictly accountable for it. And it is no ſlight commiſſion to man, to conduct man according to his condition. It is expreſs, ſimple, and the principal of all; and the creator has ſeriouſly and ſeverely enjoined it. Authority has alone the power to work upon common underſtandings, and is of more weight in a foreign language, and therefore let us again charge with it in this place. "Stultitiæ proprium quis non "dixerit, ignave, et contumaciter facere quæ facienda "ſunt; et alio corpus impellere, alio animum, diſtra-"hique inter diverſiſſimos motus †" *i. e.* 'Who will 'not ſay, that it is the property of folly, ſlothfully 'and contumaciouſly to perform what is to be done, 'and to bend the body one way, and the mind ano-'ther, ſo as to be diſtracted betwixt the moſt different 'motions?' Which to make apparent, let any one ſome day tell you what whimſies and imaginations he puts into his own pate, and upon the account of which he diverted his thoughts from a good meal, and complained of the time he ſpends in eating: you will find there is nothing ſo inſipid in all the diſhes at your table, as this fine talk of his, (for generally we had better ſleep than wake to the purpoſe we do:) and that his diſcourſes and notions are not ſo good as your fricaſſee. Though they were the raptures of Archimedes himſelf, what were they worth? I do not here ſpeak of, nor mix

* Aug. de civitate Dei, lib. xiv. c. 5. where he has a view properly to the Manichees, who held the fleſh and the body to be the production of the evil principle. † Senec. epiſt. 74.

mix with the rabble of us ordinary men, and the vanity of the thoughts and deſires that divert us, thoſe venerable ſouls, elevated by the ardor of devotion and religion, to a conſtant, and conſcientious meditation of divine things, who, by a lively endeavour, and vehement hope, having a foretaſte of the eternal nouriſhment, the final aim, and laſt ſtop of chriſtian deſires, the ſole, conſtant, and incorruptible pleaſure, diſdain all regard to our beggarly, frothy, and ambiguous conveniencies, and eaſily reſign to the body the care and uſe of ſenſual and temporal food. 'Tis a privileged ſtudy. I have ever amongſt us obſerved ſuperceleſtial opinions, and ſubterranean manners to be of ſingular accord.

Æſop, that great man, ſaw his maſter piſs as he walked: 'What,' ſaid he, 'muſt we dung too as we 'run?' Let us manage our time as well as we can, there will yet remain a great deal that will be idle, and ill employed. The mind has not other hours enough by choice, wherein to do its buſineſs, without diſaſſociating itſelf from the body, in that little ſpace it requires for its neceſſity. They aim to put themſelves out of themſelves, and to eſcape from being men. What folly is this! Inſtead of transforming themſelves into Angels, they transform themſelves into beaſts, and inſtead of elevating themſelves they ſink. Theſe tranſcendent humours affright me, like places that are high and inacceſſible: and nothing is hard for me to digeſt in the life of Socrates, but his ecſtacies and communication with dæmons. Nothing is ſo human in Plato as that for which they ſay he was called divine. And of our ſciences, thoſe ſeem to be the moſt terreſtrial and low that are higheſt mounted. And I find nothing ſo humble and mortal in the life of Alexander as his fancies about his immortalization. Philotas pleaſantly jeered him in his anſwer. He congratulated him by letter, upon the oracle of Jupitor Ammon's having placed him amongſt the Gods; 'For thy ſake I am 'glad of it, ſaid he, but the men are to be pitied,' who are to live with a man, and to obey him, who exceeds, and is not contented with the meaſure of a

man. "[Diis te minorem quod geris, imperas*.]" *i. e.* 'Becauſe thou carrieſt thyſelf lower than the Gods, 'thou doſt command men.' The pretty inſcription wherewith the Athenians honoured the entry of Pompey into their city is conformable to my ſenſe.

D'autant es tu Dieu, comme
Tu te recognois homme †.
So much thou haſt of deity
As thou doſt own of man in thee.

'Tis an abſolute, and as it were, a divine perfection, for a man to know how to enjoy his being, as he ought. We ſeek other conditions, by reaſon we do not underſtand the uſe of our own; and go out of ourſelves, for want of knowing what we do. 'Tis to much purpoſe to go upon ſtilts, for when upon ſtilts, we muſt yet walk with our legs: and when ſeated upon the moſt elevated throne in the world, we are but ſeated upon our breech. The faireſt lives, in my opinion, are thoſe which regularly accommodate themſelves to the common and human model: yet without miracle, and without extravagance. But old age ſtands a little in need of a more tender treatment. Let us recommend it to God, the protector of health and wiſdom, but withal, let it be gay and ſociable:

Frui paratis et valido mihi,
Latoe dones, et precor integra
Cum mente, nec turpem ſenectam
Degere, nec Cithara carentem §.
Grant this, Apollo, and I aſk no more,
A mind to uſe my preſent ſtore
With health and life, but not ſo long
As brings contempt and cramps my ſong.

*. Hor. lib. iii. ode 6. v. 5. † In the life of Pompey, by Plutarch, ch. 7. § Horace, lib. i. ode 31. v. 17, &c.

The End of the Third and laſt Book of Montaigne's *ESSAYS.*

BRITISH 27FE74 MUSEUM

THE

THE APPENDIX:

Containing ſix letters from Montaigne, which never appeared before in any edition of his Eſſays, nor any where elſe, except in a ſmall collection, now extremely ſcarce, which Montaigne publiſhed with the royal privilege at Paris, A. D. 1571.

LETTER I.

An introduction of Boetia's tranſlation of Xenophon's tract, intitled, OECONOMY; to monſieur de Lanſac, knight of the king's order, a member of his privy council, ſuperintendant of his finances, and captain of the hundred gentlemen of his houſhold.

SIR,

I SEND you Xenophon's Oeconomy tranſlated into French by the late monſieur de la Boetia, a preſent which I thought very proper for you, not only for its coming in the firſt place, as you know, from the hand of a perſon of diſtinction, a very great man both in war and peace; but for having taken its ſecond form from that perſon, whom I am certain you both loved and eſteemed as long as he lived. This treatiſe will be a conſtant inducement to the continuance of your favourable opinion and good-will to his name and memory. And I will be bold to ſay that you need not fear the making any addition to your regard for him, ſince as you took a liking to him only from the public teſtimonies of his character, it is incumbent on me to aſſure you that he had ſo many degrees of ability beyond

yond common fame, that you are very far from knowing him throughly. He did me the honour, which I rank with the greateſt bleſſings of my fortune, to form ſo ſtrict and cloſe a connection of friendſhip with me, that unleſs my ſight at any time failed me, there was not a bias, motive or ſpring in his ſoul, which I could not diſcern and judge of. But without offence to the truth he was, take him altogether, ſo wonderful a man, that leſt my word ſhould not be taken for any thing, if I once tranſgreſs the bounds of probability, I am forced in ſpeaking of him to conſtrain and contract myſelf ſhort of the extent of what I know of him. And for this time, Sir, I ſhall barely content myſelf with intreating you, for the honour and veneration which you owe to the truth, to believe and teſtify that our Guyenne never ſaw his fellow amongſt the gentlemen of his robe. In hopes therefore, that you will render him that which is moſt juſtly due to him, and with a view to keep him freſh in your memory, I preſent you this book, which at the ſame time will ſatisfy you on my part, that had not my inſufficiency laid me under an expreſs prohibition to do it, I ſhould have been as ready to preſent you with ſomething of my own, as an acknowledgment of the obligations which I am under to you, and of that favour and friendſhip which you have for a long time ſhewn to our family. But, Sir, for want of better coin, I offer you in payment the ſincereſt tender of my humble ſervice to you.

Sir, I beg God to protect you, and am

Your obedient ſervant,

Michael de Montaigne.

LETTER II.

An introduction of Boetia's tranſlation of Plutarch's Rules of marriage, a monſieur monſieur de Meſmes, lord de Roiſſy et de Mal-Aſſize, a member of the king's privy council.

SIR,

IT is one of the moſt remarkable follies which men are guilty of, to exert the whole force of their underſtanding

derſtanding to give a ſhock and an overthrow to opinions, that are commonly received, and ſuch too as yield us ſatisfaction and content. For whereas every thing under heaven employs means and inſtruments with which nature has furniſhed it, for the ornament and conveniency of its being, theſe men, that they may ſeem to be of a more gay and ſprightly diſpoſition, not capable of admitting and entertaining any thing but what has been a thouſand times touched and poiſed in the niceſt balance of reaſon, ſhake their minds out of a calm and eaſy ſituation for the ſake of poſſeſſing them, after a long enquiry, with doubt, uneaſineſs and fluctuation. 'Tis not without reaſon that childhood and ſimplicity have been ſo much recommended by truth itſelf. For my part, I had rather be more at eaſe, with leſs ability; more contented, with leſs underſtanding. Therefore, Sir, tho' the men of moſt refined parts laugh at our concern for what may paſs in the world after we are departed from it, as if the ſoul when lodged elſewhere had no longer any feeling for things below, yet I think it is a great comfort with reſpect to the frailty and ſhort ſpace of this life, to think that it is capable of being ſtrengthened and prolonged by fame and reputation; and I moſt heartily give into ſo pleaſant and favourable an opinion, which is innate in us originally, without a curious enquiry into the how or the wherefore. From hence it is, that as I loved no mortal ſo well as M. de la Boetia, the greateſt man of this age in my opinion, I ſhould think it a groſs failure of my duty, if I wittingly ſuffered a character ſo fragrant and ſo worthy of recommendation as his, to vaniſh and ſlip out of my remembrance; and if I did not upon that ſcore attempt to revive and raiſe him again to life. I believe that he is ſenſible of it in ſome meaſure, and that theſe efforts of mine affect and pleaſe him. In truth, he ſtill lodges in my breaſt ſo entire and ſo lively, that I cannot think him ſo deeply under ground, nor ſo totally removed from our correſpondence. Now, Sir, becauſe every freſh diſcovery which I make of his perſon and character is as a multiplication of this ſecond life of his, and becauſe

his

his name is ennobled and honoured from the place that receives it, it is incumbent on me not only to cauſe it to be propagated to the utmoſt of my power, but alſo to recommend it to the care of perſons of honour and virtue, in the number whereof you have ſo high a ſtation, that in order to afford you an opportunity of receiving this new gueſt, and giving him a good welcome, I choſe to preſent you with this ſmall work, not for any ſervice that you may reap from it, being very ſure that you have no need of an interpreter, to converſe with Plutarch and his companions; but 'tis poſſible that madame de Roiſſy, when ſhe ſees the decorum in her houſhold, and your good harmony repreſented to the life, will be well pleaſed to find her natural diſpoſition, not only to have attained to, but even to have ſurmounted what the wiſeſt philoſophers have been able to conceive of the duty and laws of marriage. And in all caſes, I ſhall ever eſteem it an honour if it lies in my power, to do any thing that may give you or yours a pleaſure; ſuch is my obligation to ſerve you.

Sir, I pray God to give you a life long and happy, being

Montaigne, April 30, 1570.

Your humble ſervant, Michael de Montaigne.

LETTER III.

Printed before Boetia's tranſlation of Plutarch's letter of conſolotion to his wife, and inſcribed by Montaigne,

To Madamoiſelle de Montaigne, my wife.

YOU know, wife, very well, that according to the faſhion of the fine gentlemen now a-days, you are not to expect to be ſtill courted and careſſed. For they ſay, that a man of parts may indeed take a woman, but that he is a fool if he marry her. Let them ſay as they liſt; for my own part, I keep to the plain faſhion of old age, of which I now and then wear the beard. And in truth novelty is ſo expenſive even now to this poor ſtate (and yet I know not whether it may not ſtill riſe higher) that in all caſes and places

I waſh my hands of it. Let you and I, wife, live after the old French way. You may remember how that dear brother and inſeparable companion of mine M. de la Boetia, did on his death-bed give me his papers and books, which were afterwards my moſt favourite furniture. I neither deſire nor deſerve that they ſhould be applied ſolely to my own uſe. For this reaſon I have reſolved to give ſome of them to my friends. And, becauſe I think I have none more intimate than yourſelf, I ſend you his French tranſlation of Plutarch's Letter of Conſolation to his Wife, being very ſorry, that fortune has rendered this ſo ſuitable a preſent for you, and that though you have had no child but one daughter, after long expectation, when we had been married four years, you were forced to part with her in the ſecond year of her age. But I leave it to Plutarch to conſole you, and to admoniſh you of your duty in this caſe, deſiring that you would for my ſake give him credit: for he will diſcover my intentions to you, and what may be urged upon this head, much better than I ſhould. To conclude, wife, I earneſtly recommend myſelf to your favour, and pray God to preſerve you. I am

Paris, Sept. 10, 1570.

Your good huſband,
Michael de Montaigne.

LETTER IV.

Printed before ſome Latin verſes of Stephen de la Boetia. To Monſeigneur, monſieur de l'Hoſpital, chancellor of France.

MONSEIGNEUR,

I HAVE a notion that ſuch a gentleman as you, to whom fortune and the reaſon of things have committed the adminiſtration of the public affairs, are not more curious in any enquiry, than how you may attain to the knowledge of the men in your offices; for there is ſcarce any community ſo barren, but it has men enough in it for the commodious diſcharge of all its functions, provided its department and juriſdiction can be juſtly laid out. And when that point is once gained, there

there would be nothing remaining to hinder the perfect compoſition of a ſtate. Now the more deſirable this is, the more difficult it is; foraſmuch as neither your eyes can ſee ſo far, as to try and chuſe in ſo great and ſo diffuſe a multitude, nor can they penetrate to the bottom of men's hearts, to diſcover their intentions and their conſciences, the chief articles to be conſidered; ſo that there was never yet any eſtabliſhment ever ſo good, in which we have not often obſerved the miſtake of ſuch allotment and election. And in thoſe, where ignorance and malice, diſſimulation, bribery, intrigues and violence carry the point, if any election is made meritoriouſly, it is undoubtedly to be aſcribed to fortune, which by the inconſtancy of its various turns, happened this one time to fall into the train of reaſon. This conſideration, Sir, has often been my comfort, knowing M. Stephen de la Boetia, one of the moſt proper and neceſſary men for the chief offices in France, to have lived all his days unemployed and neglected by his own fireſide, to the great damage of our commonweal; for as to his own part I muſt tell you, ſir, that he ſo abounded in thoſe poſſeſſions and treaſures which defy fortune, that never was any man more ſatisfied or more contented. I know indeed that he was advanced to thoſe dignities of his neighbourhood, which are reckoned great; and I know moreover that never was any man better qualfied for them, and that at thirty-two years of age when he died, he had acquired greater reputation in that claſs than any of his predeceſſors. But ſurely 'tis unreaſonable to let a man who would make a good officer, remain a common ſoldier, and to employ thoſe in mean offices who would act well in the chief. The truth is, that his abilities were not employed to the beſt advantage, nor ſufficiently exerted; ſo that over and above his office, he had a ſurplus of great talents that were idle and unprofitable, which might have been of ſervice to the public affairs, and an honour to himſelf. But, Sir, ſince he was ſo backward to puſh himſelf into the grand monde, it not being the lot of virtue and ambition to lodge in one breaſt; and as he lived in times ſo ſtupid or ſo full of envy, that he could not poſſibly have any

aſſiſtance

aſſiſtance from another's teſtimony of him; I long prodigiouſly, that at leaſt his memory, which alone muſt now and ever lay claim to the offices of our friendſhip, may receive the reward of his merit, and that it may have a place in the recommendation of perſons of honour and virtue. For this reaſon, Sir, I was deſirous of bringing him to light, and preſenting him to you by theſe few Latin verſes that he has left behind him. Quite contrary to the maſon who exhibits the gayeſt part of his edifice towards the ſtreet, and to the mercer who makes a ſhew and parade of the richeſt ſample of his goods, the things moſt to be prized in my friend, the very juice and marrow of his merit, went away with him, and we have nothing left of him but the bark and the leaves. The man who is capable of diſplaying the well-regulated ſallies of his imagination, his piety, his virtue, his juſtice, the vivacity of his temper, the weight and ſolidity of his judgment, the ſublimity of his conceptions, ſo far exalted above thoſe of the vulgar, his learning, the gracefulneſs that uſually accompanied all his actions, the tender love which he had for his wretched country, and his mortal and avowed averſion to every vice, but eſpecially to that baſe traffick which is ſcreened under the honourable name of juſtice, would certainly kindle a ſingular affection for him in the breaſts of all good men, mixed with a wonderful regret for the loſs of him. But, Sir, this is ſo far out of my power, that he never had a thought of leaving any evidence to poſterity of the fruit of his ſtudies, and nothing remains thereof but what he wrote now and then to paſs away the time. Be this as it will, I intreat you, Sir, to receive him with a good countenance; and as we often judge the greater by the leſs, and as the very paſtimes of great men give an honourable idea to the clearſighted, of the ſource from which they ſprung, I hope you will by this work of his riſe to the knowledge of himſelf, and by conſequence love and embrace his name and memory. In ſo doing, Sir, you will but render an equivalent to the very ſettled opinion which he had of your virtue, and alſo accompliſh what he exceedingly longed for whilſt he lived. For there was not a man in the world,

in whoſe acquaintance and friendſhip he thought himſelf more happy than in yours. But if any one takes it ill that I make ſo bold with other people's concerns, I muſt tell him, that never was any thing more exactly written or delivered in the ſchools of the philoſophers, concerning the prerogatives and duties of ſacred friendſhip, than what was the practice betwixt this perſonage and me. For the reſt, Sir, this trivial preſent, like killing two birds with one ſtone, will ſerve, if you pleaſe, to ſhew you the honour and veneration in which I hold your abilities, and ſingular inherent qualities; for as to ſuch as are external and fortuitous, 'tis not my fancy to bring them into the account.

Sir, I pray God to grant you very happy long life,

Montaigne, April 30, 1570. Your obedient humble Servant,

Michael de Montaigne.

LETTER V.

Or rather an Extract of a Letter, which monſieur the counſellor de Montaigne, wrote to his father monſeigneur de Montaigne, containing ſome particulars which he obſerved, of the ſickneſs and death of the late M. de la Boetia.

AS to his laſt words, if a good account of them is to be expected from any hand, 'tis undoubtedly from mine; not only becauſe all the time of his ſickneſs, he was not ſo fond of converſing with any body as with me, but alſo becauſe, ſuch was the ſingular and brotherly love we bore to one another, that I had a moſt certain knowledge of his deſigns, opinions, and temper, all his life-time, as much, no doubt, as it was poſſible for any one man to know of another, and becauſe I knew them to be ſublime, virtuous, determinate, and withal wonderful: I foreſaw, that if his diſtemper would give him ſtrength to expreſs himſelf, nothing would come from his lips but what was great, and very worthy of imitation; therefore I gave the utmoſt attention to it. 'Tis true, monſeigneur, that as my memory is very ſhort, and moreover bewildered by the trouble

of

of my mind for ſo heavy and important a loſs, it is impoſſible but I may have forgot many things which I could wiſh were known; but as for thoſe which I recollect, I will ſend you them with the ſtricteſt regard to truth that is poſſible. For in order to repreſent him thus cruelly ſtopped in his worthy progreſs; to ſhew you his invincible courage in a body broke down and demoliſhed by the furious efforts of pain and death, would, I confeſs, require a much better ſtile than mine, becauſe, though when he talked of grave and important ſubjects, he mentioned them in ſuch a manner, that it was difficult to write them down ſo well, yet it ſeemed at this time as if there was an emulation betwixt his thoughts and his words which ſhould do him the laſt ſervice. For ſure I am that I never obſerved him to have ſo many and ſuch fine imaginations, and thoſe uttered with ſo much eloquence as his were all the time of his illneſs. Preſuming, monſeigneur, that you would not diſlike it, I have choſen to bring into my narrative his moſt trivial and common topicks, which having been delivered by him at that time, and in the height of ſo great an affliction, are a ſingular evidence of a mind quite at eaſe, tranquil and ſecure.

On Monday the 9th of Auguſt, 1563, after I was come home from the Palais, I ſent to invite him to dine with me. He returned me for anſwer, with thanks, that he was a little out of order, and that I ſhould do him a pleaſure if I would but ſpend an hour with him before he ſet out for Medor. Soon after I had dined I waited on him. He was lain down on the bed with his cloathes on, and I found his countenance ſtrangely altered. He told me that he had a looſeneſs on him, attended with the gripes, ever ſince the day before when he played with M. d'Eſcars, and wore only a doublet under a ſilk garment; and that often when he caught cold it was attended with ſuch fits. I thought it proper he ſhould undertake the journey he had intended, but adviſed him to go no further that evening than to Germignan, which is but two leagues out of town. I did this the rather, becauſe the place where he lay was cloſe to ſome houſes that were infected with the plague, of which he was ſomewhat afraid, ſince he returned

from Perigord and the Agenois, where it raged in all parts; and beſides I had formerly myſelf found benefit in ſuch a diſtemper as his was, by riding on horſeback. Accordingly he ſet out accompanied by his wife and his uncle M. de Bouillonas.

Early the next morning behold one of his domeſtics came to me from mademoiſelle de la Boetia, to acquaint me that he had been ſeized that night with a violent dyſentery; ſhe ſent for a doctor and an apothecary, and deſired me to come to him, which after dinner I did.

He was overjoyed to ſee me; and when I was taking my leave of him in order to return home, with a promiſe to viſit him again next day, he deſired me, with more affection and importunity than ever he had begged any thing in his life, to be with him as much as poſſible; this touched me a little to the quick. Yet I was actually going away when mademoiſelle de la Boetia, who had already a foreboding of I know not what calamity, intreated me with tears in her eyes that I would not ſtir from him that night. Accordingly ſhe prevailed on me to ſtay, at which he was very much cheered. Next day I returned home, and on Thurſday I went to ſee him again. His diſtemper was worſe, and his flux of blood, with the gripings, which weakened him very much, increaſed every hour.

On the Friday I ſaw him again, and on Saturday I found him very low-ſpirited. He then told me that his diſtemper was of the contagious kind, and moreover, that it was diſagreeable and choleric; that he very well knew my temper, and deſired me to viſit him but now and then, yet as often as I could. After this I did not leave him. Till the following Sunday he had ſaid nothing to me of what he thought of his being, and we diſcourſed only about the particular circumſtances of his malady, and what the antient phyſicians ſaid of it. We had very little talk about public affairs, which I found from the very firſt day, he had an averſion to. But on the Sunday he fainted away: and as he came to himſelf, he ſaid that all things appeared to him in confuſion, and that he had ſeen nothing but a thick cloud and an obſcure miſt, in which every thing was confounded

founded and diſordered; but that nevertheleſs all this fit had given him no diſpleaſure, Death, ſaid I then to him, has nothing worſe than this: nay, nothing, replied he, ſo bad.

Having had no manner of ſleep ſince the firſt attack of his diſtemper, and growing ſtill worſe notwithſtanding all remedies, ſo that certain draughts were now taken by him which are never ordered but in caſes of the laſt extremity, he began from this time to deſpair altogether of his recovery, and communicated his thoughts to me. The ſame day, becauſe he was in good temper, I ſaid to him, that conſidering the extraordinary affection which I bore to him, it would ill become me if I did not take care, that as all his actions in health had been very prudent and well weighed, he ſhould continue to act with the ſame prudence in his ſickneſs; and that if it were God's will that he ſhould be worſe, I ſhould be very ſorry that for want of advice he ſhould leave any of his domeſtic affairs unſettled, not only by reaſon of the damage his relations might ſuffer by it, but for the ſake of his reputation; which piece of advice he took very kindly at my hands; and after having ſolved ſome difficulties which kept him in ſuſpence, he deſired me to call his uncle and his wife ſingly to him, that he might give them to underſtand what he was reſolved on as to his will. I told him that would caſt them down. No, ſaid he, I will comfort them, and give them much better hopes of my recovery than I entertain myſelf. And then he aſked me whether the fainting-fits which he had did not a little ſurpriſe us? That is of no moment ſaid I to him, theſe are fits which are common to ſuch diſtempers. True, brother, replied he, 'tis of no ſignificance, tho' what you are moſt afraid of ſhould be the conſequence. To you alone, ſaid I, it would be a happy turn, but the hurt would be to me, who ſhould thereby loſe the company of ſo great, ſo wiſe and ſure a friend, whoſe equal I am certain I ſhould never find. 'Tis very poſſible, he added, that you never may; and I aſſure you, that what makes me ſomewhat ſolicitous for my recovery, and not to haſten to that paſſage to which I am gone already

already halfway, is the conſideration of the loſs you will ſuſtain, as well as that poor man and poor woman there (alluding to his uncle and his wife) whom I love intirely, and who, I am ſure, will have much difficulty to bear the loſs of me; which indeed will be a very great one, both to them and you. I am alſo concerned for the regret it will be received with by many people, who have hitherto had a love and value for me, and whoſe converſation verily, if I could help it, I own I ſhould be glad not to loſe as yet. And if I go off the ſtage of this world, I intreat you, brother, as you know them, to give them a teſtimony of the friendſhip I retain for them, to the laſt breath of my life: and moreover, brother, I was not born perhaps to ſo little purpoſe, but I have had it in my power to ſerve the common cauſe. But be this as it will, I am ready to depart when it ſhall pleaſe God, being very ſure that I ſhall enjoy the eaſe you have foretold to me. And, as to you, my friend, I know you to be ſo wiſe, how much ſoever it affects you, that you will nevertheleſs conform patiently and willingly to whatever it ſhall pleaſe his divine majeſty to order concerning me; and I beſeech you to take care that the mourning for my departure may not drive that good man and good woman out of the pale of their reaſon. He then aſked me how they behaved already, I told him very well conſidering the importance of the caſe. I ſuppoſe ſo, ſaid he, now that they have ſtill ſome hopes; but ſhould I once deprive them of any hopes, you will be much perplexed to keep them in temper. In purſuance of this regard for them, he always concealed from them the certain perſuaſion he had of his death, as long as he lived, and earneſtly begged me to behave in the ſame manner. When he ſaw them near him, he affected to look briſk and gay, and fed them with flattering hopes.

I now left him to go and call them. They compoſed their countenances the beſt they could for a while; and after we were ſeated round his bed, we four being all alone, he ſpoke as follows with a ſettled countenance, as it were quite gay: 'My uncle and my wife, I aſſure 'you upon my credit, that no freſh attack of my diſ-

'temper,

'temper, or miſapprehenſion that I have of my reco-
'very, has put it into my head to call you, in order to
'apprize you of my intention; for, God be praiſed, I
'am very well and full of hopes; but having long
'been convinced, both by experience and ſtudy, of the
'little ſecurity that is to be placed in the inſtability
'and inconſtancy of human affairs, and even of the
'uncertainty of that life of which we are ſo fond,
'which is nevertheleſs but ſmoke and a meer nothing;
'and conſidering alſo, that becauſe I am ſick, I am ſo
'much the nearer advanced to the danger of death, I
'am reſolved to put my domeſtic affairs in order before
'I die, after having firſt taken your advice.' And
then addreſſing his diſcourſe to his uncle. 'My good
'uncle, ſaid he, were I at this hour to give you an ac-
'count of the great obligations I have to you, I ſhould
'not know where to end. 'Tis enough for me that
'hitherto whereſoever I have been, and with whomſo-
'ever I have talked, I have always ſaid that whatever
'a wiſe, good and moſt bountiful father could do for
'his ſon, all this have you done for me; both for the
'care that was neceſſary to give me good learning,
'and when you were pleaſed to puſh me into publick
'employments; ſo that the whole courſe of my life has
'been full of great and praiſe-worthy offices of your
'friendſhip towards me: in ſhort, whatever I have, I
'hold from you, and acknowledge that I am obliged
'for to you, who have been to me a father indeed; ſo
'that as the ſon of the family, I have no power to
'diſpoſe of any thing, unleſs you are pleaſed to give
'me leave.' He then was ſilent, and ſtaid till ſighs
and ſobs gave his uncle leiſure to anſwer him, that
whatever he thought fit would be always very accepta-
ble to him. Having purpoſed at the ſame time to make
him his heir, he deſired him to accept of his eſtate.

And then turning his diſcourſe to his wife, 'My
'likeneſs, ſaid he, (for ſo he often called her on ac-
'count of ſome antient relation betwixt them) as I
'have been joined to you by the ſacred tye of marriage,
'which is one of the moſt reſpectable and inviolable
'obligations which God has laid upon us here below

'for

'for keeping up human ſociety, I have loved, cheriſh-
'ed and eſteemed you as far as I was able; and am
'fully aſſured that you have returned me a reciprocal
'affection, which I cannot ſufficiently acknowledge.
'I deſire you to take that ſhare of my goods which I
'give you, and to content yourſelf therewith, though
'I know indeed that 'tis very little compared with your
'deſerts.'

After this, addreſſing himſelf to me, 'My brother,
'ſaid he, whom I love ſo dearly, and whom I have
'choſen out of ſuch a multitude, in order to renew
'that virtuous and ſincere friendſhip with you, the ex-
'erciſe of which has by the vices of the age been ſo
'long unknown to us that there are only ſome old
'traces left of it in the memory of antiquity, I beſeech
'you as a token of my affection for you, to accept of
'the gift of my library and books, a preſent very ſmall,
'but given with a good heart, and which is the fitter
'for you conſidering you are a lover of learning.
'This will ſerve you as a μνημόσυνον, or a remem-
'brancer of your companion.'

Then addreſſing himſelf to all three of us in gene-
ral, he bleſſed God that in a caſe of ſuch extremity he
was accompanied by all thoſe that were the deareſt to
him in the world, and ſaid, he thought it a very good-
ly ſight to ſee four perſons aſſembled together ſo well
agreed, and united in friendſhip, not doubting, he
ſaid, that we all loved one another unanimouſly, each
one for the ſake of the others. And after having re-
commended us to one another, he proceeded thus:
Having now ſettled my temporal affairs, I muſt alſo
think of my ſpirituals. I am a chriſtian; I am a ca-
tholic; ſuch I have lived and ſuch I am determined
to die. Send for a prieſt to come to me, for I
am not willing to be deficient in this laſt duty of a
chriſtian.

With this particular he ended his diſcourſe, which he
had carried on with ſuch a ſteady countenance, ſuch a
ſtrength of language and voice, that whereas when I
entered his chamber, I found him weak, mighty ſlow in
the utterance of his words, his pulſe very low, as if he
had

had a lingering fever, and tending to death, his countenance quite pale and wan; he ſeemed now, as if it had been by a miracle, to have reſumed freſh vigour, with a more ruddy complexion and a ſtronger pulſe, ſo that I made him feel mine in order to compare them together. At that inſtant my heart was ſo ſunk that I could ſcarce anſwer him a word. But two or three hours after, in order to keep up his noble courage, and alſo becauſe I wiſhed, from the tender concern I had all my life long for his honour and glory, that there were more witneſſes of ſo many ſtrong proofs of his magnanimity, by having a larger company in his chamber, I ſaid to him, that I bluſhed for ſhame to think that my courage failed me in the hearing of what he, who was ſo great a ſufferer, had the courage to tell me; that hitherto I had thought, that God ſcarce ever gave us ſo great an advantage over human incidents, and could hardly believe what I had read of it in ſome hiſtories; but that having now ſeen ſuch a proof of it, I praiſed God that I had found it in a perſon, by whom I was ſo much beloved, and who was to me ſo dear, and that this would ſerve me as an example to act the ſame part in my turn.

He interrupted me by deſiring I would behave ſo, and demonſtrate by the effect, that the converſation we had had in the time of our health, was not only oral but deeply engraved on our hearts, and ready to be put in execution upon the firſt occaſion that offered, adding, that this was the true practice of our ſtudies, and of philoſophy. Then taking me by the hand, 'My brother, my friend, ſaid he, I aſſure thee I have 'done many things, I think, in my life, with as much 'pain and difficulty as I do this. And when all is ſaid 'and done, 'tis a long while ago ſince I was prepared 'for it, and that I had got all my leſſon by heart. 'But is it not enough to have lived to my age? I was 'juſt entering into my 33d year. By God's grace all 'my days hitherto have been healthy and happy; but 'through the inconſtancy of human affairs they could 'not continue ſo longer. It was now time to launch 'into ſerious affairs, and to expect to meet with a thou-

'ſand

'ſand unpleaſant ſcenes, as particularly the inconveni-
'encies of old age, of which I am by this means quit:
'and beſides, 'tis probable that I have lived to this
'hour with more innocence and leſs ill-nature than I
'ſhould have done, if God had permitted me to live
'till my head had been filled with the care of getting
'wealth and eaſe. As for my part, I am certain that
'I am going to God, and the ſeat of the bleſſed.' But now, becauſe my countenance betrayed ſome uneaſineſs at theſe words of his, 'What, brother, ſaid he, would 'you poſſeſs me with fear? If I had any terror upon 'me, whoſe buſineſs ſhould it be to take it off, but 'yours?'

The notary, who was ſent for to receive his laſt will and teſtament coming in the evening, I made him commit it to writing, and then went to aſk him whether he was not willing to ſign it: Not ſign it, ſaid he, I will ſign it with my own hand. But I wiſh, brother, that they had given me more time; for I find myſelf extremely weary, and ſo weak that I am in a manner ſpent. I was going to change the diſcourſe, but he recovered himſelf on a ſudden, and ſaid to me, that he had not very long to live, and he deſired of me to know whether the notary wrote a ſwift hand, for he ſhould ſcarce make any pauſe in dictating. I called the notary to him, and he dictated his will to him on the ſpot, ſo faſt that he had much ado to keep pace with him. When he had made an end, he deſired me to read it to him, and ſaid to me, 'See, what it is to 'take care of that fine thing our riches.' "Sunt hæc "quæ hominibus vocantur bona," i. e. 'Theſe are the 'things that men call good.' After the will was ſigned, his chamber being full of people, he aſked me if talking would do him any harm; I ſaid no; provided he ſpoke ſoftly.

Then he called mademoiſelle de Saintquentin, his niece, to him, and ſpoke to her thus. 'My dear 'niece, I think that ever ſince I have known you, I 'have ſeen the rays of a very good nature ſparkle in 'your countenance; but theſe laſt offices which you 'perform with ſo much affection and diligence in my 'preſent neceſſity, give me very great hopes of you,

'and

'and really I am obliged to you and thank you, moſt 'affectionately. Now in order to diſcharge my con-'ſcience, I adviſe you in the firſt place to devote your-'ſelf to God, for this is no doubt, the principal part 'of our duty, and that without which no other 'action of ours can be either good or goodly; and 'when ſuch devotion is hearty, it neceſſarily draws 'after it all other virtuous actions. Next to God, you 'muſt love and honour your father and your mother, 'even your mother my ſiſter, whom I take to be one 'of the beſt and moſt prudent women in the world; 'and deſire you to regulate your life by her example. 'Don't ſuffer yourſelf to be drawn aſide by pleaſures. 'Avoid as a peſtilence thoſe ſilly familiarities with 'which you ſee the women ſometimes indulge the 'men; for tho' there may be no harm in them at 'firſt, yet by little and little they corrupt the mind, 'and lead it to a thoughtleſs ſtate, and from thence to 'the abominable ſink of vice. Believe me, the ſureſt 'protection of a young woman's chaſtity is gravity. I 'deſire you (and expect you will remember me by fre-'quently recollecting the friendſhips I have ſhewed 'you) not to complain and grieve yourſelf for the loſs 'of me; and as far as is in my power, I lay all my 'friends under the ſame prohibition, ſince it would 'look as if they envied the happineſs of which by the 'favour of death, I ſhall ſoon ſee myſelf in poſſeſſion; 'and aſſure yourſelf, my girl, that if God was now to 'indulge me with the choice, whether of living my 'life over again, or of finiſhing the journey which I 'have begun, I ſhould be actually at a loſs which to 'chuſe.' My dear niece, adieu.

He then called to mademoiſelle d'Arſat, his daugh-ter-in-law, and ſaid to her: 'My daughter, you have 'no great need of admonitions from me, as you have 'a mother whom I have found ſo prudent, ſo very 'conformable to my temper and inclinations, that ſhe 'never once offended me. You will be very well in-'ſtructed by ſuch a tutoreſs: and don't think it ſtrange 'if I, who am not related to you by blood, have a 'care and anxiety for you. For ſince you are the 'daughter of a perſon ſo near to me in alliance, it is

'impoſ-

'impoſſible but I muſt alſo be touched with whatever 'concerns you. At the ſame time I have ever taken 'as much care of the affairs of M. d'Arſat, your bro-'ther, as if they were my own. You have enough 'both of wealth and beauty. You are a gentlewo-'man of a good family. You have nothing more to 'do than to grace them both with the talents of the 'mind, which I deſire you will not fail of doing. 'I do not forbid you that vice which is ſo deteſtable 'in women; for I am not willing ſo much as to think 'you can ever entertain a favourable thought of it, 'nay, I am of opinion that you abhor the very name 'of it. My daughter-in-law, farewel.'

Though the whole chamber was full of weeping and waiſing, it did not interrupt the thread of his diſcourſes, which were pretty long. But after he had made an end, he ordered every one to quit his room except his garriſon, which was the name he gave to his maid-ſervants. And then calling to my brother de Beauregard, he ſaid to him; 'M. de Beauregard, I 'thank you very heartily for the pains you take for 'me. I have ſomething very much at heart, which I 'long to tell you, and will therefore with your leave 'diſcover it to you.' And being encouraged by my brother, he proceeded thus: 'I ſwear to you that of 'all who have ſet about the reformation of the church, 'I never thought there was any one man that entered 'upon it with better zeal and a more intire, ſincere 'and undiſguiſed affection than you: and I verily be-'lieve, you was excited to it merely by the vices of 'our prelates, who undoubtedly ſtand in need of 'great amendment, and by certain imperfections, that 'have in a courſe of time crept into our church. I do 'not wiſh at this juncture to diſſuade you from it, as I 'do not willingly deſire any-body to do any thing 'whatſoever againſt his conſcience. But I would fain 'caution you, that in regard to the good reputation 'which your family has acquired by their perpetual 'agreement, a family than which not one in the world 'is dearer to me, (good God, where is ſuch another 'family as this, which never did an action unbecom-'ing an honeſt man!) in regard to the will of your fa-

'ther,

'ther, that good father to whom you are ſo much ob-
'liged, and of your uncle, and for the ſake of your
'brethren, you would avoid coming to extremities; be
'not ſo ſharp and ſo violent; accommodate yourſelf to
'them. Make no ſeparate combination nor party; but
'unite yourſelves together. You ſee what ruin theſe
'diſſentions have brought upon this kingdom, and I
'can aſſure you that they will be attended with ſtill
'greater miſchiefs: And as you are not deficient either
'in wiſdom or goodneſs, be cautious of bringing your
'family into theſe inconveniencies, for fear they ſhould
'deprive it of the honour and happineſs which it has en-
'joyed to this hour. Take what I ſay to you, ſir, in
'good part, and for a ſure teſtimony of the friendſhip
'which I bear to you. For with this view I hitherto
'reſerved my mention of it to you; and perhaps the
'condition in which you now ſee me ſpeaking it will
'give my words more weight and authority with you.'
My brother thanked him very much.

On the Monday morning he was ſo bad that he quit-
ted all hopes of life; inſomuch that the very next time he
ſaw me, he in a very deplorable tone ſaid: 'Brother, have
'you no pity for the many torments that I ſuffer? Do
'not you now ſee, that all the relief you give me ſerves
'only to prolong my pain?' Soon after this he fainted;
ſo that we began to give him over for dead: At length
by the power of vinegar and wine he was revived. But
he did not live long after, and hearing us lament about
him, he ſaid: 'My God, who is it torments me ſo?
'Why was I robbed of that profound and pleaſant reſt
'which I had? Pray leave me to myſelf.' And then
hearing me, he ſaid, 'And you too, brother, are not
'willing neither that I ſhould be cured. Oh, what eaſe
'do you deprive me of!' At laſt being a little more
come to himſelf, he deſired a little wine, and liking it
well; ſaid to me, it was the beſt liquor in the world.
'No ſurely, ſaid I, for argument ſake, 'Water is
'the beſt.' 'Yes, without doubt, replied he,' water is
'an excellent Thing, ὕδωρ ἄριστον. His extreme parts
even to his face were now become as cold as clay, at-
tended with a death-ſweat, which ran down all his bo-
dy, he had ſcarce any ſign of a pulſe left. This Morn-

ing he confeſſed to his prieſt, who did not bring all the neceſſaries with him, and therefore could not celebrate the maſs. But on Tueſday morning M. de la Boetia ſent for him to aſſiſt him as he ſaid, in the performance of the laſt duty of a chriſtian. Conſequently he heard maſs and received the ſacrament. And when the prieſt was taking leave of him, he ſaid: 'My ſpiritual 'father, I humbly beſeech it of you, and thoſe who are 'under your charge, to pray to God for me, that if it 'be ordered in the moſt ſacred rolls of the decrees of 'God that I ſhould now end my days, that he would take 'pity on my ſoul, and forgive me my ſins, which 'are without number, as it is not poſſible for ſo vile 'and baſe a creature as I am, to perform the com-'mands of ſo high and mighty a maſter; or if it ſeem-'eth good to him, that I ſhould tarry longer in this 'world, beg of him to put a ſpeedy period to the ago-'nies which I ſuffer; and that he would be ſo gracious to 'me, as to guide my ſteps hereafter in the path of his 'holy will, and to make me better than I have been.' At this period he ſtopped a little to take breath, and ſeeing that the prieſt was going away, he recalled him, and ſaid to him: 'I am willing to declare this alſo in 'your preſence: I proteſt, that as I have been baptiſed 'and have lived, ſo I am willing to die, in the faith 'and religion which Moſes firſt planted in Egypt, which 'the patriarchs received afterwards in Judæa, and 'which in the progreſs of time has been handed down to 'us in France.' It ſeemed as if he would fain have ſpoke a little more, if he had been able to have held out; but he concluded with deſiring his uncle and me to pray to God for him; this being, he ſaid, the beſt office that chriſtians can perform for one another. In ſpeaking he happened to uncover his ſhoulder, and deſired his uncle to cover it again, tho' he had a valet nearer to him: And then looking upon me, he ſaid, 'Ingenui eſt, cui multum debeas, ei plurimum velle 'debere.' It is the quality of an ingenuous mind to deſire to be under ſtill greater obligation to the perſon whom we are much obliged to already. In the afternoon M. de Belot came to viſit him, and taking him by the hand, ſaid to him, 'My 'friend, I came hither,

'ſir

'ſir, on purpoſe to pay my 'debt, but I have 'found a worthy creditor, who has forgiven it me.' 'A little after, ſtarting ſuddenly out of a doze, he 'ſaid, 'Well, well, come when it will, I wait for 'it with ſerenity and pleaſure.' Words which he repeated two or three times in his illneſs. Afterwards as they were forcing open his mouth to take a draught, he ſaid, turning himſelf to M. de Belot, 'An 'vivere tanti eſt?' Is life worth all this ado? In the evening death began indeed at night to ſtrike him with its arrows, and as I was at ſupper, he ſent for me, being nothing now but ſkin and bones, or as he called himſelf, 'Non homo ſed ſpecies hominis.' Not a man but of the human race. And he ſaid to me with the utmoſt ſtruggles: 'My brother and friend, God grant 'that I may ſee the imaginations that I have juſt been 'entertained with, realiſed.' After he had ſtopt a while, and laboured hard with the deepeſt ſighs for utterance, for then the tongue was beginning plainly to deny him its laſt office, I ſaid, 'What were thoſe ideas, brother?' 'Great,' ſaid he, 'very great.' It never happened before, I added, that I had not the honour of being made acquainted with all your ideas; will you not let me ſtill enjoy that confidence? 'Yes ſurely, brother,' ſaid he, 'but it is not in my power to diſcover them; they are 'wonderful, infinite and unſpeakable.' There he ſtopped, for he could proceed no farther; inſomuch, that a little before he would fain have talked to his wife, when he ſaid to her, with the moſt chearful countenance he could put on, that he had ſomething to tell her; and he ſeemed to ſtrive to ſpeak, but his ſpirits failing, he called for a little wine to raiſe them, but it ſignified nothing; for he fainted away on a ſudden, and for a good while loſt his ſight. Being now juſt on the confines of death, and hearing the lamentations of his wife, he called her, and ſpoke thus to her: 'My image, you torment yourſelf be-'fore the time; won't you pity me? take courage. Verily 'I am more in pain for what I ſee you ſuffer than what 'I feel myſelf, and with reaſon, becauſe as for the evils 'which we feel of our own, it is not, properly 'ſpeaking, we who feel them, but certain ſenſes 'which God has planted in us; and, what we feel for

'others, we feel by a certain judgment and faculty of rea-'ſoning. But I ſee I am going.' This he ſaid becauſe his ſpirits failed him. Now being afraid that he had frighted his wife, he recovered himſelf and ſaid: 'I find my-'ſelf inclined to ſleep: Good night, wife, go your ways.' This was the laſt leave he took of her. After ſhe was gone, Brother, ſaid he to me, 'keep cloſe by me, if you 'pleaſe;' and then either feeling the darts of death come thicker and ſharper, or elſe the force of ſome hot medicine which they made him ſwallow, he ſpoke with a ſtronger and more audible voice, and turned himſelf in bed with perfect violence, ſo that all the company began to have ſome hopes, becauſe hitherto he had been ſo very weak that we deſpaired of him. Then amongſt other things he begged me again and again, with the greateſt affection, to make room for him, ſo that I was afraid he was delirious. Moreover, when I had gently remonſtrated to him that he was overpowered by his diſtemper, and that theſe were not the words of a man in his right ſenſes; he did not ſeem to be convinced, but repeated it ſtill more ſtrongly. 'Brother, brother, what 'won't you give me room?' inſomuch that he forced me to convince him by reaſon, and to ſay to him, that ſince he breathed and talked he had by conſequence his place. 'Yes, yes' ſaid he, 'but that is not what I 'want; and beſides ſay what you will, I have no lon-'ger a being.' 'God will give you a better very ſoon, 'ſaid I.' 'Would to God, brother, ſaid he, I was there 'now; I have longed to be gone theſe three days paſt.' In this diſtreſſed ſtate he often called to me, in order, for the moſt part, to know whether I was near him. At length he inclined a little to reſt, which confirmed us ſtill more in our good hopes; ſo that I went out of his chamber to congratulate thereupon with Mademoiſelle de la Boetia; but about an hour after naming me once or twice, and then fetching a deep ſigh, he gave up the ghoſt about 3 o'clock on Wedneſday morning, the 18th of Auguſt 1563, aged 32 years, 9 months and 17 days.

LETTER

LETTER VI. *

To Monſeigneur Monſeigneur de Montaigne.

MONSEIGNEUR,

IN obedience to your commands laſt year at your houſe at Montaigne, I have with my own hand put that great Spaniſh divine and philoſopher Raymond de Sebonde into a French dreſs, and have, as much as lay in my power, ſtripped him of that rough mien and unpolite aſpect, which he firſt appeared in to you; ſo that in my opinion he is comely and complaiſant enough to appear in the beſt of company. It is poſſible that ſome delicate curious readers may perceive, he has a little of the Gaſcogne turn and bias; but they may be the more aſhamed of their own negligence, in ſuffering a perſon quite a novice and a learner to get the ſtart of them in this work. Now, Monſeigneur, it is but reaſon that it ſhould be publiſhed to the world, and have the credit of your name, becauſe what amendment and reformation it has is all owing to you. Yet I plainly perceive, that if you ſhould pleaſe to ſettle accompts with him, you will be very much his debtor, ſince in exchange for his excellent and moſt religious diſcourſes, of his ſublime, and as it were divine conceptions, it will appear that you have only brought him words and language, a merchandiſe ſo mean and vulgar, that he who has the greateſt ſtock of it is peradventure the worſe for it.

Monſeigneur, I beg God to grant you a long and happy life.

Your moſt humble and moſt obedient Son,

MICHAEL DE MONTAIGNE.

' N. B. Mr. Coſte has inſerted a letter before this, ' which is addreſſed to Mademoiſelle de Paumier, but it ' is only a ſhort one, of meer Compliment.

* I met with this letter by way of dedication of Raymond Sebonde's natural theology, tranſlated into French by Michael ſeigneur de Montaigne, knight of the king's order, and gentleman in ordinary of his privy-chamber. Printed at Roan by John de la Mere, A°. 1641.

BRITISH MUSEUM 27FE74

A COMPLETE INDEX

Of the most REMARKABLE MATTERS

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